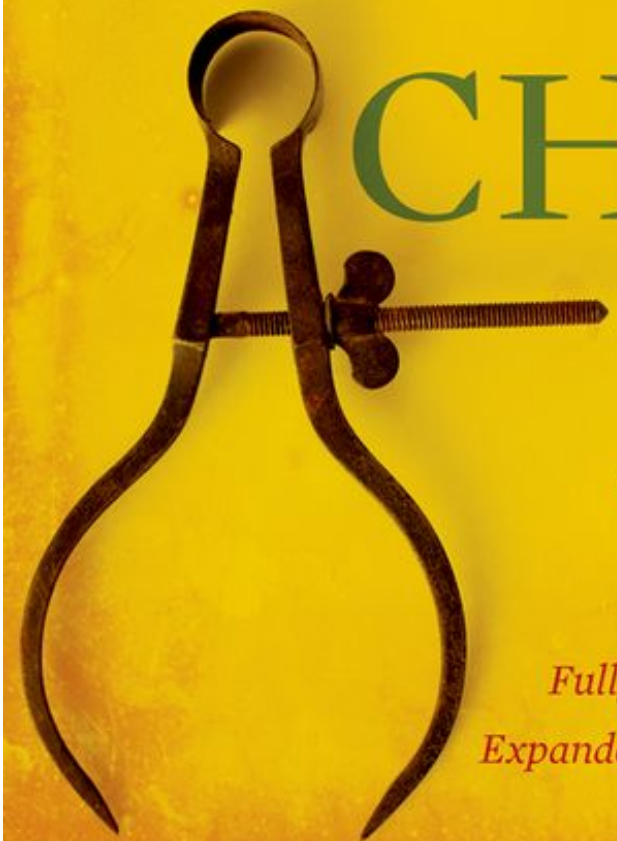
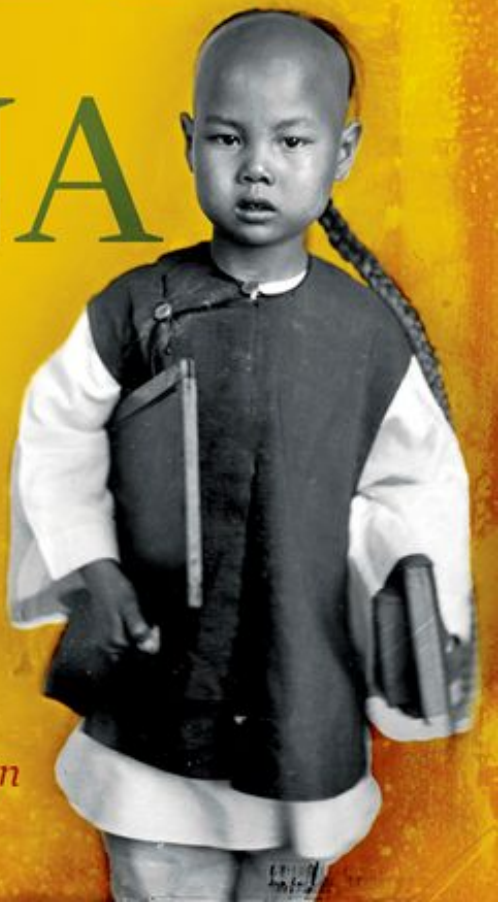
FRANK DIKÖTTER

The DISCOURSE *of* RACE *in* MODERN CHINA





Fully Revised and Expanded Second Edition

近代中國之種族觀念

白春寒夜如晤友黑女醜惡如雲煤

THE DISCOURSE OF RACE IN MODERN CHINA

FRANK DIKÖTTER

The Discourse of Race in Modern China

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CONTENTS

Preface to the Revised and Expanded Edition
Preface
Acknowledgements

1. Race as Culture: Historical Background

SECTION ONE

The barbarian in the classics
The barbarian in mythology
Environmental determinism
'Raw' and 'cooked' barbarians
Skin colour
White ash
Black coal

SECTION TWO

Anti-Buddhism
Song loyalism
Anti-Manchuism

2. Race as Type (1793–1895)
Demonology
Teratology
Anatomy
Geography
Typology

3. Race as Lineage (1895–1903)
Racial war

Racial origins
Racial extinction
Racial classification
Racial hierarchy
Racial frontiers
Racial assimilation
'Western influence'
Alternatives

4. Race as Nation (1903–1915)
Racial evolution
Racial preservation
Racial ancestry
Racial origins
Racial nationalism

5. Race as Species (1915–1949)
Introduction
Origins
Colour
Hair
Intelligence
Stereotypes
Hierarchy
Armageddon

6. Race as Seed (1915–1949)
Background
Expansion
Apogee

7. Race as Nationality (1949–2012)
Race and class under Mao
Race and nation since 1978
Eugenics

Popular racism

Notes
Bibliography
Index

PREFACE TO THE REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION

'Races do not exist, they are imagined.' So I wrote in the preface of *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* more than twenty years ago. This always seemed to me to be a rather uncontroversial argument, all the more since the concept of 'race' had been repeatedly exposed as a dangerous illusion by a broad range of historians, sociologists, anthropologists and biologists—one thinks of Richard Lewontin and Stephen Gould. But I underestimated the tenacity of racial discourse. As Marek Kohn underlined in his *Race Gallery: The Return of Racial Science*, scientific arguments in favour of race are persistent and versatile.[1]

The very fact that science itself is a complex and ever-evolving field speaking in many voices means that new claims purporting to demonstrate the existence of 'racial differences' continue to reappear. Recent advances in genomics, for instance the Human Genome Project, have even led to folk notions of 'race' being given renewed credibility today. Not only do some biologists claim that the 'five races' historically envisaged by Blumenbach and others several centuries ago really do exist, but it is also alleged that 'black', 'brown', 'red', 'yellow' and 'white' people have significant differences at the genomic level that lead to their susceptibility to particular diseases.[2] Neil Risch, while fully aware of the potential misunderstanding that might be caused by discussing race and genetics together, contended in 2004—with a number of qualifications—that 'self-ascribed race and continental ancestry often have relatively high predictive value' in medically significant terms: folk knowledge, it is even alleged, remains for the time being a good guide to genetic differences.[3]

In an even less subtle manner Armand Leroi, in an editorial for the *New York Times* in March 2005, asserts that there are different biological foundations in the human species by proclaiming that 'races are real'.[4] As the new chapter at the end of this revised edition shows, similar claims are common in the People's Republic of China. The injunction from Yang Lien-sheng, with which the book concluded twenty years ago, is as relevant now

as it was then: racial discourse should be 'spelled out in order to be dispelled', all the more as it has widespread currency in the world's second largest economy.

Another trend since the publication of *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* belongs to a tradition sometimes referred to as the 'cognitive and evolutionary approach'. Its proponents agree that racial classifications have no biological foundation, but believe that race is more than just a social construct: it is a basic cognitive category common to all societies, ancient and modern. Race, from their point of view, is not culturally and historically contingent. Racial categorisations might well be elaborated in slightly different ways, but, in the words of Edouard Machery, 'humans tend to classify people when they meet other people with different phenotypes'.[5] Race, in short, is a universal category based on human cognition. Proponents of this thesis agree that there are few cross-cultural studies to validate the presumed universality of racial thinking, in particular when it comes to non-European societies. Some have turned to *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* for evidence. Machery and others use the book to posit that 'the Chinese' classified other people in racial terms well before the advent of the modern age. The most recent example is Ron Mallon, who uses my book to buttress an article questioning the idea that 'race thinking' was invented in the West.[6]

This is probably the most misunderstood aspect of my book, and I would like to briefly address it here. As the title indicates rather unambiguously, the book is about modern China. Like most social constructivists, I argued that the concept of race is a recent, modern invention heavily dependent on the rise of science. There were no 'white' or 'black' people anywhere until racial theories appeared first in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and then elsewhere. The first chapter in the *Discourse of Race* looks at the premodern era. The title of the chapter is clear: 'Race as Culture'. It points out that the very distinction between 'race' and 'culture' is a modern invention which has no validity for the premodern era. In the case of China, what some would today term as 'race' overlapped with 'culture'. The chapter gives several examples. In a twelfth-century description of African slaves, bought from Arab merchants by rich merchants in Canton, cultural change was believed to entail a physical transformation:

> Their color is black as ink, their lips are red and their teeth white, their hair is curly and yellow. There are males and females… They live in the mountains (or islands) beyond the seas. They eat raw things. If, in captivity, they are fed on cooked food, after several days they get diarrhoea. This is called 'changing the bowels' [*huanchang*]. For this reason they sometimes fall ill and die; if they do not die one can keep them, and after having been kept a long time they begin to understand human speech [i.e. Chinese], although they themselves cannot speak it.[7]

In popular Daoism, a human had to change bones [*huangu*] in order to become immortal: by analogy, African slaves were expected to change bowels [*huanchang*] to become half-human. A physical transformation, in other words, was perceived to be an intrinsic part of cultural assimilation. Even in the nineteenth century, scholar-officials like Xu Jiyu who had extended contact with European traders and were familiar with world geography wrote how 'the hair and eyes of some [Europeans] gradually turn black when they come to China and stay for a long time. The features of such men and women half-resemble the Chinese.'[8]

But to say that 'race' is a modern construct dependent on the language of science does not mean that it appeared out of nowhere. It is precisely because it is a historically contingent concept that it is important to look at the pre-existing moral and cultural traditions which have assisted, or on the contrary prevented, the appearance of racial thinking in China. This was the second purpose of the first chapter. It showed that while the concept of race did not appear until the end of the nineteenth century, there were many cultural, social and political traditions that had a strong resonance with the racial categorisations that would spread like wildfire after 1895. These are, among others, the symbolic importance given to the colour yellow, a negative view of dark skin and a patrilineal way of organising society which strongly emphasised lines of descent. Put differently, the book argued that racial discourse in modern China was not simply translated from Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, but was the result of a complex process of negotiation and appropriation, as racial thinkers constructed a new worldview with very complex cognitive, social and political dimensions. In brief, *The Discourse of Race* highlighted inculturation where others might see acculturation.

The first edition of *The Discourse of Race* had a brief epilogue on the Maoist decades. That epilogue has now been expanded into a full chapter that takes the reader up to the twenty-first century. I was well aware of the resilience of racial theories and attitudes in China when I wrote the first edition of this book. After all, I was one of the Europeans caught up in the

assault on African students in Tianjin University on 24 May 1986, spending the night hunkering under tables in a dining hall where a party was being held. Some 300 students surrounded the building and hurled bricks through the windows until the police arrived in the early hours of the morning to take all Africans into 'protective custody'.[9] But I was reluctant, as a historian, to make too many connections between these seemingly isolated incidents and the prolific racial discourse of the decades before the communist takeover of 1949. And I also believed, rather naively, that racist attitudes were the result of ignorance after the country had been closed to the outside world for decades under Mao.

But I soon changed my mind. In 1998 I published a long article pointing out how the notion of 'race' was alive and well in China.[10] Hundreds of studies were being undertaken in serology, genetics, paleaoanthropology and anthropometry to claim that 'minority people' in China, from Tibetans to Uighurs, were biologically linked to the Han majority, and constituted a relatively homogeneous line of descent with a unique ancestor. As Zhang Zhenbiao, the doyen of physical anthropology in China, put it in 1985 in the prestigious *Acta Anthropologica Sinica*, 'It is beyond doubt that the Tibetans and the other nationalities of our country descend from a common origin and belong, from the point of view of physical characteristics, to the same East-Asian type of yellow race [*huangzhongren de Dongya leixing*].'[11] The borders of the People's Republic, in short, are claimed to be founded on a much deeper biological entity, referred to as a 'Chinese nationality' (*Zhonghua minzu*).

The last chapter incorporates this material, and much more besides, drawing attention to the popular racism that has spread since the 1980s, aided in no small measure by the internet. Africans and African-Americans in particular are regularly the victims of racist abuse, from the riots against African students in the late 1980s to the hundreds of rants on the web directed at Condoleezza Rice after her visit to the country in 2005.

The material presented in the original chapters remains very much the same. But I have rephrased many a sentence, reorganised some paragraphs, and completely revised large sections in several chapters. I have not updated the bibliography systematically, since this is a new edition, not a brand new book, but where fresh and important research directly relevant to the topic at hand has appeared, I have edited the text and added new footnotes. I hope this new edition will continue to stimulate interest in the

history of racial discourse as a global phenomenon, as it did twenty years ago when the first version appeared.

PREFACE

'Race' is a growing area of interest in the social sciences. In history, considerable research has laid bare the extent of racial thinking in the West. Racism, it is well known, was not peculiar to a bigoted and ignorant minority in Europe: it was an attitude shared by many highly respected people until the 1930s at least. In the United States, racial segregation did not disappear with the abolition of slavery, but was legally enforced until the 1950s and continues to persist without legal sanction to this day—ruining the everyday lives of countless people. Racial theories were upheld by popular bodies of opinion, political groups and scientific institutions until the end of the Second World War.

It is less well known, however, that racial theories also thrived in societies outside Europe and America. It is often assumed that racism can only be a 'white' phenomenon against other people, sometimes lumped together under the heading 'coloured'. The narrow focus of such historical research, which is understandable given the extraordinary damage wrought by racism in the last two centuries and by the fact that 'race' was first and foremost a European invention, has obscured our understanding of racial thinking in non-Western countries.[1] In China, a discourse of 'race' first appeared at the end of the nineteenth century under the guise of 'science'. The use of racial categories of analysis influenced many thinkers in China throughout the twentieth century, and to this day the foundation of 'Chinese nationality' is claimed by the People's Republic of China to be an organic entity with an uninterrupted line of descent which can be traced back to Peking Man. Although the importance of racial thinking has been recognised by several historians, no systematic study of it has ever been undertaken.

The first chapter of this book presents the historical background to assumptions about 'race' in imperial China. It introduces a broad spectrum of material on traditional attitudes towards skin tone, the social perception of physical differences, the concept of 'barbarians', ideas of environmental determinism and ethnocentric theories. The second chapter considers the

formation and composition of racial stereotypes during the nineteenth century. Chapter 3 discusses the emergence of a racial discourse among the reformers at the turn of the century. The reformers were the first to use evolutionary theories from Europe to present the world as an arena of different 'races' fighting for survival. Racial theories were further elaborated by the revolutionaries, who presented the 'Han' as a majority 'race' in China fighting against both the ruling Manchus and imperialist powers. Chapter 5 focuses on racial thinking in the academic community of republican China (1911–49). The last chapter is devoted to eugenics, the pseudo-science of race improvement. 'Race' remained an alternative form of discourse after the communist takeover in 1949; this is briefly discussed in the epilogue.

Races do not exist, they are imagined. Phenotypical variations like hair texture or skin colour are subjectively perceived and culturally constructed by social groups: some may focus on skin tone, others on eye colour. These biological differences do not in themselves induce cultural differences, but are utilised to legitimise role expectations: physical features, in other words, are given social meaning. Classifications based on physical appearance have no scientific foundation. The assignment of racial categories varies according to the sociocultural environment. As a result, race as an identifying construct does not have a fixed meaning, but can vary enormously over time. From this perspective, a history of racial discourse can only adopt a nominalist approach: it describes how 'race' has been defined, and how and why these definitions have changed historically. The word 'race' should always be enclosed in quotation marks, were there no practical or stylistic drawbacks. I translate as 'race' (*zu, zhong, zulei, minzu, zhongzu, renzhong*, in Chinese) terms that appear to stress the physical rather than the sociocultural aspects of different peoples. 'Racial' is used here as the adjectival form of 'race'.

My analysis of racial theories in modern China is based on a wide range of source material. It incorporates the writings of leading intellectuals, influential political texts, scientific journals, popular periodicals, travel accounts, textbooks and translations, as well as scientific literature and popular texts on evolution, biology, medicine, anthropology, genetics, eugenics, racial hygiene and human geography. Most of these sources were produced by scholarly elites, who never amounted to more than a fraction of the overall population. If it is possible to distinguish between different

cultural levels, then this study clearly represents an elitist history: it is concerned, on the whole, with the history of an idea among different groups of intellectuals. Popular culture has not been considered for practical reasons, mainly related to the fact that most reliable source material is limited to elite culture. Although the nature of the relationship between 'elite' and 'popular' culture is an important point of debate, it may be hypothesised that a high degree of reciprocal influence existed between the two. A careful study of popular discourse would probably reveal many parallels to the views held by the educated elite. Similarly, it is beyond the scope of this work to examine 'Han' perceptions of minority people, with the important proviso that the very idea of the 'Han' as a majority group was precisely the result of racial discourse, as Chapter 4 demonstrates.[2] But racial thinking was at its most salient when scholars in China attempted to classify people around the world into different racial categories, not when they wrote about minority peoples. Despite many disparaging comments on the supposedly bestial origins of the minority peoples, most writings stressed sociocultural differences rather than presumed racial distinctions well into the 1930s if not beyond. This study investigates how different groups of scholars produced racial theories about 'outside barbarians' (*waiyi*), Europeans and Africans in particular, and about themselves in the process, and is less concerned about what was written about 'inside barbarians' (*neiyi*).

Finally, it should be emphasised that the study of racial thinking in non-Western societies is still in its incipient stage. This book does not pretend to be final. If it is able to generate a fruitful discussion, it will have achieved its main purpose.

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Responsibility for the views expressed in this book, as for errors and omissions, is mine alone.

Have you heard about the origin of the world's human races? This is a story unique to us Hakka people. Before, when there was no trace of man on earth, Tai Bai decided to create mankind. He used clay, just as we make pottery or porcelain, and after having moulded it into a human figure, he put it into the kiln. The first one was fired for too long, and was badly burnt: it was all black! This was not so good, and Tai Bai threw it away, using all his strength, throwing it a long way. He threw it to Africa; hence afterwards everyone in Africa was black. As a result of this first failure, the second one was fired more carefully. It was allowed to bake only for a little while and then taken out of the kiln. Look: too white! This wasn't very good either, and Tai Bai again threw it away. This time, he did not throw it so far. He threw it to Europe, hence afterwards everyone in Europe was white. Experience now allowed the third one to be baked to perfection: not too long, not too short. Pretty good! Neither black nor white, but all yellow. Tai Bai was very satisfied, and put it down on the ground. Hence afterwards everyone in Asia was yellow. (*Taiwan Kejia suwenxue* [Folk literature of the Hakka in Taiwan], retold by Zhou Qinghua, Taipei: Dongfang wenhua shuju, 1971, pp. 149–50).

1

RACE AS CULTURE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

SECTION ONE

In an article on the role of skin colour and physical characteristics in non-Western countries published in the 1960s, Harold Isaacs argued that racial prejudice among non-Europeans existed long before their exposure to the ideas of the conquering white Europeans, and that the charge of Western responsibility for the racial attitudes of ex-colonies was only partly valid. 'Where responses to Westerners took place in racial terms, they were superimposed upon strongly-rooted attitudes about race and skin color that long antedated this encounter.'[1]

The purpose of this introductory chapter is threefold. It attempts to show, first, how attitudes about skin colour and physical characteristics are of great antiquity in China; secondly, that significant parts of the Confucian tradition predisposed scholars in China to perceive the new world order created by Western expansion in terms of 'race'; and, thirdly, that successive periods of contact with frontier peoples fostered protonationalist feelings. Foreign population groups that conquered and ruled China include the Jin (1115–1234), the Mongols (1280–1368) and the Manchus (1644–1911). It should be emphasised that in the absence of substantial studies concerning the social perception of physical features in traditional China, this introduction can only be tentative. It is by no means intended to discuss the traditional Chinese world view in a systematic way.[2] For our purposes, it will suffice to point out that some form of racial categorisation, however unsystematic, existed well before the arrival of Europeans in the nineteenth century.

The barbarian in the classics

Social groups are in a constant process of redefinition and reorientation, thereby changing themselves and the symbolic universe to which they relate. But the symbolic universe sets the context and gives meaning to change. The symbolically constructed network of meanings, rules, conventions, signs and values form a structured system in which the group operates. In imperial China, the Confucian classics formed the core of this symbolic system. The Five Classics are the ancient books which comprised the syllabus for the disciples of Confucius, namely the *Shujing* (Book of History), the *Shijing* (Book of Odes), the *Yijing* (Book of Changes), the *Liji* (Book of Rites) and the *Chunqiu* (Spring and Autumn Annals).

The classics are generally believed to have been oriented towards the world, or *tianxia*, 'all under heaven'. The world was perceived as one homogeneous unity named 'great community' (*datong*). The absence of any kind of cultural pluralism implicit in this symbolic universe has been called a 'political solipsism':[3] the governing elite, dominated by the assumption of its cultural superiority, measured alien groups according to a yardstick by which those who did not follow the precepts of Confucianism were considered 'barbarians'. It is assumed that this world view, originating mainly from the *Gongyang* school (commentaries on Confucius' *Chunqiu*), generated at least one valuable tendency: it obliterated racial distinctions to emphasise cultural continuity. A theory of 'using Chinese ways to transform the barbarians' (*yongxiabianyi*) was strongly advocated. It was believed that the barbarian could be culturally absorbed: *laihua*, 'come and be transformed', or *hanhua*, 'become Han', Han in this case referring not to an ethnic group but to the Han dynasty. The *Chunqiu*, a chronological history of the Spring and Autumn period (722–481 BC), traditionally attributed to Confucius, hinged on the idea of cultural assimilation. In his commentary on the *Gongyang*, He Xiu (129–182 AD) later distinguished between the *zhuxia*, the 'various people of Xia [the first Chinese empire]', and the Yi and Di barbarians, living outside the scope of the empire. In the Age of Great Peace, an allegorical concept similar to the Golden Age in the West, the barbarians would flow in and be transformed: the world would be one.

The myth of a Chinese antiquity that abandoned racial standards in favour of a concept of cultural universalism in which all barbarians could ultimately participate has understandably attracted the attention of some

modern scholars. Living in an unequal and often hostile world, it is tempting to project the utopian image of a racially harmonious community into a distant and obscure past. To counterbalance this highly idealised vision of the Chinese past, some researchers have drawn attention to passages from the classics which are apparently incompatible with the concept of cultural universalism. Most quoted is the *Zuozhuan* (fourth century BC), a feudal chronicle: 'If he is not of our race, he is sure to have a different mind' (*fei wo zulei, qi xin bi yi*).[4] This sentence seems to support the allegation that at least some degree of 'racial discrimination' existed during the early stage of Chinese civilisation.

Both perspectives have in common the adoption of a modern conceptual framework that distinguishes sharply between 'culture' and 'race', corresponding respectively to ethnocentrism and racism when used as a yardstick to diminish other population groups. The dichotomy between culture and race, which has proved to be a viable conceptual tool in analysing modern attitudes towards outsiders, should be abandoned in our case. It introduces an opposition so far not supported by historical evidence, and tends to project a modern construct into a remote phase of history.

Physical features and cultural characteristics were thought to overlap in Chinese antiquity. The border between humans and animals was blurred. 'The Rong are birds and beasts.'[5] This was not simply a derogatory description: it was part of a worldview that integrated civilisation with the notion of humanity, picturing the alien groups living outside the pale of Confucian society as distant savages hovering on the edge of bestiality. The names of outgroups were written in characters with an animal radical, a habit that persisted until the 1930s: the Di, a northern tribe, were thus assimilated with the dog, whereas the Man and the Min, people from the south, shared the attributes of reptiles. The Qiang had a sheep radical.

The *Liji*, or Book of Rites (third century BC), underlined that 'the Chinese, the Rong, the Yi and [the other] peoples of the five quarters all have [their own] nature, which cannot be moved or altered.'[6] The 'five quarters' referred to a cosmographical plan which first appeared in the *Tribute of Yu*, a part of the *Shujing*, or Book of History (fifth century BC). This plan divided the world into five concentric configurations. Around the imperial centre (*didu*), the hub of civilisation, came the royal domain (*dianfu*) and the lands of the feudal princes (*houfu*). Beyond these two areas lay a zone of pacification (*suifu*) that separated civilisation from the last two

zones, inhabited by steppe people and savages.[7] As noted by Ruth Meserve, the very name of the last zone, called the 'submissive wastes' (*huangfu*), evoked a dreadful imagery of drought and famine, of barrenness and desolation.[8]

Throughout history, scholars and rulers viewed the people of the northern steppes with an almost traumatic apprehension. The sea, on the other hand, gave a feeling of natural protection. The spherical concept of the world inherent in most of China's cosmological representations was conveniently completed by surrounding all habitable ground by four seas (*sihai*). China was placed at the centre of the world. Foreigners were relegated to the periphery: they were referred to as the 'barbarians of the four quarters' (*siyi*).

Some of these barbarians were associated with a particular colour. The ancient texts repeatedly mentioned the red or black Di, the white or black Man, the pitch-dark Lang.[9] These colours were symbolic. They indicated either the dominant tint of the minorities' clothes or the five directions of the compass: white for the West, black for the North, red for the East, blue-green for the South. Yellow represented the Centre.

Every civilisation has an ethnocentric world image in which outsiders are reduced to manageable spatial units. Ancient India opposed the pure land of the Aryans to the territories of the *mleccha*, or 'barbarians'.[10] The Europeans, from the Greeks onwards, viewed the world as composed of three continental parts: Asia, Europe and Africa. During the Middle Ages, Christians associated this tripartite division of the earth with the three sons of Noah. Europe, however, occupied only a quarter of this universe, as was noted by Isidore of Seville, a seventh-century bishop and author of a representative geographical compilation:

> The ancients did not divide these three parts of the world equally, for Asia stretches right from the south, through the east to the north, but Europe stretches from the north to the west and thence Africa from the west to the south. From this it is quite evident that the two parts Europe and Africa occupy half the world and that Asia alone occupies the other half.[11]

The eurocentric vision of Europe was tempered by a threefold representation of the world. It was also marked by the fact that the centre of civilisation was outside Europe, in Jerusalem. As a result of a complex combination of factors, the discussion of which exceeds the framework of this chapter (one could mention geographical isolation and demographic

superiority), China's imagination was marked by a narrow dichotomy that opposed the civilised centre to a barbarian periphery.

The barbarian in mythology

The degree of remoteness from the imperial centre corresponded to levels of cultural savagery and physical coarseness. In the *Shanhaijing* (fourth century BC), a work of geographical mythology, spirits and monstrous beasts roamed the edges of the world beyond the Great Wilderness (*dahuang*): they were half-man, half-animal.[12] Barbarians living beyond the realm of civilisation were systematically dehumanised. The mythological function of the *Shanhaijing* evidently supplanted its ethnographical purpose: there was a tribe of one-eyed people (*Yimuguo*), as well as a country of three-headed barbarians (*Sanshouguo*). One-armed barbarians with three eyes also appeared. Imagining the barbarian clearly implied a sense of radical otherness.

Skin colour was part of this imaginary, and it pointed at radical physical differences. A mythical country in the west was inhabited by white people whose long hair covered their shoulders. Barbarians from another tribe had a human face, 'but their eyes, hands and feet are entirely black.' Only the Chinese were described as *ren*, 'man', or 'human being'.

The *Huainanzi* (a Daoist work of the second century BC) also associated cultural inferiority with an alien physical appearance. 'In the West is the high land where streams and valleys come out, where the sun and moon enter. There its men have mean faces, are deformed, have long necks, walk upright, and have a hole going through the nose. The skin is like leather. The white color governs the lungs. They are intrepid, but not virtuous.'[13] The north was 'gloomy and dark, not bright and fresh. That [i.e. the light] is obstructed, and there is only wintry ice. Therefore even insects hibernate. Whosoever is there hides and its people contract the appearance of short necks, large shoulders, and a cavity going down to the end of the spine, cold bones. Black governs the kidneys. Its people are simple and stupid, like beasts, and are long-lived.'[14]

The link between cultural inferiority and physical alterity in the imaginary of ancient China has only a partial equivalent in Europe. When Ethiopians first appeared in Homeric poems as the most remote people on earth, their image was essentially favourable. Greek theories of the

influence of the environment on people explained humanity's diversity: black Ethiopians exemplified the broad scale of human potential. In the early Roman Empire, Pliny the Elder reported that the less-known regions of the distant north and south were inhabited by imaginary creatures. Skin colour, however, did not play a significant role in antiquity. Frank M. Snowden Jnr believed that concrete knowledge of Ethiopia as well as frequent encounters in antiquity between Europeans and Africans prevented skin colour from being interpreted as an outward manifestation of cultural inferiority.[15]

Environmental determinism

Yin and Yang Confucianism is perhaps the source of a belief in environmental determinism that contributed to the dehumanisation of outsiders. Yin and yang, the two primogenial forces of nature, produced all living organisms. Yin was the negative fluid, associated with the earth; it was female, dark, cold, moist and quiescent. Yang was the positive fluid, related to heaven; it was male, active, warm and light. The yin pole was situated in the north, where it produced cold and darkness. The yang pole was in the south and generated heat and light. Only humans were the result of a perfect harmony of both fluids. The furred and feathered creatures were dominated by the yang fluid, whereas the scaly and shell-covered ones owed their existence to the yin fluid.[16]

The five colours of the points of the compass also described the differences in the nature of China's soils, which were supposed to exert a decisive influence on people: 'It is yellow, red or black, of superior, average or inferior quality.'[17] The *Liji* stressed how 'the bodily capacities of the people are sure to be according to the sky and earthly influences'.[18] In his commentaries on the *Liji*, Zheng Xuan (127–200 AD) explained that differences in the natural constitution of the barbarian were caused by the local 'earth fluid' (*diqi*).[19]

Such environmental theories were developed under the Tang (618–907). Du You (735–812) believed that the barbarians of his time were backward partly because they were less favoured in terms of climate and environment than the Chinese. They lacked the spiritual guidance of the sages whom

China's environment had produced, nurtured by the pure ethers of Heaven and Earth.[20]

'Raw' and 'cooked' barbarians

'The people of those five regions […] had all their several natures, which they could not be made to alter. The tribes on the east were called Yi. They had their hair unbound, and tattooed their bodies. Some of them ate their food without its being cooked.'[21] Food was a social signifier, symbolically marking differences between social groups and indicating cultural identity. In most civilisations, the main distinction was between raw and cooked food.[22] The transforming power of fire was a symbol of culture.

Two categories of barbarians lived within the Middle Kingdom. The *shengfan*, literally 'raw barbarians', were considered savage and restive. The *shufan*, or 'cooked barbarians', were tame and submissive. The consumption of raw food was regarded as an infallible sign of savagery that affected the physiological state of the barbarian. Nature and nurture were closely associated in this imaginary. Official rhetoric often separated the Li of Hainan, an island in the south, into 'raw' and 'cooked' barbarians. The tame Li lived along the coastal fringes, enjoying all the benefits of civilisation. The wild Li populated the dark forests, far from the humanising influence of the imperial centre.

Slaves bought from Africa were treated similarly in elite culture. The *Pingzhou ketan*, written by Zhu Yu at the beginning of the twelfth century, noted that wealthy people in Canton used what they called 'devil slaves' (*guinu*) from Africa:

> Their colour is black as ink, their lips are red and their teeth white, their hair is curly and yellow. There are males and females … They live in the mountains (or islands) beyond the seas. They eat raw things. If, in captivity, they are fed cooked food, after several days they get diarrhoea. This is called changing the 'bowels' *[huanchang*]. For this reason they sometimes fall ill and die; if they do not die one can keep them, and after having been kept a long time they begin to understand human speech [i.e. Chinese], although they themselves cannot speak it.[23]

Whereas popular Daoism held that a human had to change their bones (*huangu*) to become immortal, slaves had to change their bowels (*huanchang*) to become half-human. Physical change enhanced intellectual capacity, although foreign slaves would never reach the level of inter-human communication. While further research would be necessary to

evaluate how representative this example is, it clearly corroborates the hypothesis of a strong link between physical appearance and cultural achievement in the Confucian imaginary.

Skin colour

It was not in mythology only that skin colour played a significant role. The Chinese elite developed a white-black polarity at a very early stage. Henri Maspero underlined that the Chinese called their own complexion 'white' from the most ancient times.[24] A white complexion was highly valued, as Chinese poetry has shown in many instances. This is how the *Shijing*, the earliest collection of poems, extols the fairness of a famous princess:

Her fingers were like the blades of the young white grass;
Her skin was like congealed ointment;
Her neck was like the tree-grub;
Her teeth were like melon-seeds;
Her head cicada-like,
Her eyebrows the silkworm moth.[25]

White jade was used as a metaphor for a light complexion. Although it was mainly a canon of feminine beauty, it could also apply to men. Wang Yan, the last prime minister of the Western Jin dynasty (265–316 AD), was famed for his grace, in particular for the 'jade-like' whiteness of his hands.[26] At court, male nobles even used powder to whiten their faces.[27]

As a result of an increase in maritime activities and contacts with foreigners, awareness of skin colour was heightened further during the Southern Song (1127–1279). The Buddhist pantheon was sinicised, including the transformation of the Bodhisattva image from a 'swart half-naked Indian to a more decently clad divinity with a properly light complexion', as one student of Buddhism notes.[28] The importance of a fair complexion was sustained by encounters with people from neighbouring countries, who were generally seen to be darker. When Albuquerque first arrived in Malacca in 1511, the natives drew his attention to the existence of 'white' people in the region: he found Chinese emigrants.[29] A geography of the early Ming corroborates this anecdote by reporting that 'people in Malacca have a black skin, but some are white: these are Chinese'.[30]

Not everybody in the realm had the privilege of a light complexion. People in the countryside were called 'black-headed people': the label established a symbolic distance between the peasants and the landlords. Though this term changed in meaning as a result of an official decree issued in 221 BC, it was associated with a negatively valued dark complexion. According to the *Shuowen* (first century AD), commoners were called 'black-headed' because of their skin tone. The *Chunqiu* emphasised the dark appearance of peasants, burned swarthy by the sun. Under the Zhou, slaves were called *renli*. *Li* referred to a large cooking utensil stained by smoke and blackened by fire. It was a metaphor for the black faces of the slaves who tilled the fields under the burning sun and implied contempt and disdain.[31]

The polarity between white and black, based on social hierarchy and a particular set of aesthetic values, was projected upon the outside world when China came into contact with outsiders. Black symbolised the most remote part of the geographically known world. Chinese texts up to the Tang dynasty presented the distant peoples of the Nam-Viet Cham empire, corresponding roughly to Vietnam today, as black, wavy-haired barbarians of the mountains and the jungles. They were seen as 'devils' or 'ghosts' (*gui*).[32] The Khmers were also called kunlun people, by reference to a mythical mountain appearing in the *Shanhaijing*. The Kunlun mountain marked the western edge of the known world. As geographical knowledge progressed, the location of the kunlun people shifted. In the eighth century, the term was applied to Malaysians. In 750, Jianzhen (688–765) noticed the presence of many 'Brahmans, Persians and Kunluns [Malays]'[33] in Canton. The *Book of the Tang* reported that 'every year, Kunlun merchants come in [their] ships with valuable goods to trade with the Chinese.'[34] Madagascar, discovered during the Song, was called *Kunluncengqi*, a term in which *cengqi* was a transliteration of the generic Arabic word for blacks, *Zang*. The island was believed to have 'many savages with bodies as black as lacquer and with curly hair'.[35]

Between white, the centre of the civilised world, and black, the negative pole of humanity, relegated to the edge of the known world, lay a whole range of nuances. Shades of colour became more precise as China grew familiar with a whole variety of outsiders. Under the Tang, observes Jane Mahler, 'the darker skin of India seems to have interested some of the

Chinese imagemakers; one supposes at times that they were confused by the dark-skinned people, for they did not distinguish clearly between Hindus, Negroes and Malays.'[36] During the Song, which saw an increase in the social significance of skin colour, distinctions become more common. Zhao Rugua's work notes that people in Ceylon were 'very black' (*jifu shenhei*). In Malabar, people were of a 'purple complexion' (*zise*). The savages of the Andaman islands, feared to be cannibals, were described as having 'bodies like black lacquer' (*shen ru heiqi*).[37]

During the early Ming, several expeditions to distant countries were organised by Zheng He as part of the expansionist policy of the Yongle emperor (r. 1403–24). Ma Huan accompanied Zheng He on three expeditions and in 1451 published an account entitled *Yingya shenglan*. The bodies of the people in Malacca were 'slightly black' (*shenti weihei*), whereas the faces of Bengalis were 'completely black' (*ren zhi rong jiehei*). Natives of Ormuz had a 'clear white' complexion (*qinghai*); the inhabitants of Mecca had a 'purple-chest colour' (*zitangse*).[38]

White ash

Europeans were as weird as other distant foreigners. An early mention by Yan Shigu (eighth century AD), a commentator of the *Qianhanshu*, noted that they had 'blue eyes and red beards; they look like macaques [*mihou*].'[39] In China's imaginary, Europeans were just another variety of physically defective creatures, provoking curiosity mingled with a feeling of repulsion and pity. Their complexion was not merely white, it was 'ash-white' (*huibai*), the exteriorisation of the demonological forces that drove them to undertake their expansion overseas. Zhang Xie, who also mentioned the presence of 'white' Chinese in Malacca, described the Portuguese as follows: 'They are seven feet tall, have eyes like a cat, a mouth like an oriole, an ash-white face, thick and curly beards like black gauze, and almost red hair.'[40] These hairy goblins were naturally associated with their black counterparts from beyond the Kunlun mountains, as the verses of a nineteenth-century poem on the British and Indian troops reveal: 'The white ones are cold and dull as the ashes of frogs, the black ones are ugly and dirty as coal.'[41]

Black coal

As we have seen, ancient texts in imperial China repeatedly mentioned blackness when referring to people from Southeast Asia. Many population groups, in other words, *became* black, even if they had not previously been regarded as being so. It included any and all people with relatively darker skin tone, even peasants who tilled the fields. As Don Wyatt has argued, the 'blacks of premodern China were neither African nor, in our conventionally modern interpretation of the term, black.' Only from the Tang dynasty onwards was the ascription of blackness cast even more widely to include Africans—from all parts of the continent. As the historian Zhang Xinglang has argued, slaves from Africa imported into China during the Tang, although it is not always clear from which part of the continent they came.[42] According to Duyvendak, the first definite reference to Africa appears in the *Youyang zazu*, written by Duan Chengshi (?—863) at the end of the Tang dynasty:

> The country of Po-pa-li [Berbera] is in the south-western sea. [The people] do not eat any of the five grains but eat only meat. They often stick a needle into the veins of cattle and draw blood which they drink raw, mixed with milk. They wear no clothes except that they cover [the parts] below the loins with sheepskins. Their women are clean and of proper behaviour. The inhabitants themselves kidnap them, and if they sell them to foreign merchants, they fetch several times their price.[43]

Under the Song, as seafaring expanded, reports on the Arab slave trade became more common. Zhou Qufei wrote that Madagascar had many savages, who were 'enticed by food and then caught and carried off; thousands are sold as slaves.'[44] Zhao Rugua made the same remark and added that 'they are used as gate-keepers [lit., to look after the gate-bolts]. It is said that they do not long for their kinsfolk.'[45] Foreign slaves, carried to Asia by Persian and Arab merchants, could fetch three taels of gold or its equivalent in scented woods per head on the Chinese market.[46] Zhu Yu called the door-keepers *yeren*, 'wild men', or *guinu*, 'devil slaves'. He also mentioned 'kunlun slaves', a variety of black creatures 'who can enter the water without blinking their eyes': these slaves worked on ships and were forced to repair seams that had sprung leaks below the waterline.[47] African stewards also served on Chinese ships during the Song.[48] As late as the nineteenth century, crews on Chinese-owned ships were Filipinos and Africans.[49]

When the Portuguese settled in Macau during the second half of the sixteenth century, they imported many slaves from their colonies in Africa, India and Malacca. African women and numerous female Timorese slaves were brought to Macau after 1555.[50] Antonio Bocarra, writing in 1635, reported that each Portuguese household in Macau had an average of six slaves, 'amongst whom the majority and the best are negroes and such like.'[51] These African slaves sometimes ran away into China, and eventually constituted a community of their own in a district of Canton. Chinese merchants who engaged in foreign trade occasionally used them as interpreters.[52] Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) now and then intervened by returning runaway slaves to the Portuguese.[53]

SECTION TWO

The first part of this chapter focused on physical features in the social imaginary. This section will briefly examine the political theories that rejected the dominant rhetoric of cultural universalism. It should be remembered that even if the exclusionist approach examined here remained limited in effect, it did create theoretical precedents that may have inspired scholars during the late Qing.

The most salient aspect of the exclusionist approach was a belief in the incompatibility between the respective natures of the Chinese and the barbarian. The origin of this belief is usually traced back to the classics, particularly to a passage in the works of Mencius (372–289 BC?), in which he reproached Chen Xiang for having abandoned the learnings of China, saying: 'I have heard of men using the doctrines of our great land to change barbarians, but I have never heard of any being changed by barbarians.'[54] The nature of the Chinese was regarded as impermeable to outside influences; no retrogression was possible. Only the barbarian might eventually change by adopting Confucian ways.

Mencius' views were first expounded during the Six Dynasties (221–589 AD), when the efflorescence of Buddhism threatened the sense of cultural superiority which had buttressed the social status of the elite since antiquity. Anti-Buddhist arguments were based mainly on the words of Mencius quoted above, but their meaning was expanded into a position of mutual exclusiveness.

Anti-Buddhism

Buddhism was a curiosity which was confined to the court under the Han dynasty. Only after the fall of the Han in 221 AD and the partition of the empire into rival kingdoms did it begin to expand rapidly. By the fifth century it had flourished to such an extent that it provoked Daoist opposition.

Gu Huan (390–453) was a prominent enemy of Buddhism. In a treatise entitled *Yixialun* (About Chinese and Barbarians), he argued that Buddhism was inferior to Chinese systems because of its foreign origin:

> Buddhism originated in the land of the barbarians; is that not because the customs of the barbarians were originally evil? The Tao originated in China; is that not because the habits of the Chinese were originally good? … Buddhism is not the way for China, Taoism is not the teaching of the western barbarians. Fishes and birds are of different origins, and never have anything in common. How can we have Buddhism and Taoism intermingle to spread to the extremities of the empire?[55]

The comparison of Buddhism and Daoism to fishes and birds underlined a basic discontinuity between the two religions. The idea of a fundamental difference between the natures of Chinese and Indians had also been put forward by He Chengtian (370–447):

> The inborn nature of the Chinese is pure and harmonious, in accordance with altruism and holding to righteousness—that is why the Duke of Chou and Confucius explained to them the doctrine of (original unity of) nature and (differentiation by) practice. Those people of foreign countries are endowed with a hard and obstinate nature, full of evil desires, hatred and violence—that is why Sakyamuni severely restrained them with the five prohibitive rules (for laymen).[56]

The Daoist work *Sanpolun* attacked Buddhism even more violently. It contained an unabashed appeal to the elimination of the barbarians:

> The barbarians are without benevolence, unyielding, violent and without manners, and are not different from birds and beasts … They are also coarse and uncivilised. Desiring to exterminate their evil progeny, Lao-tzu ordered the males not to take wives, and the females not to take husbands. When the entire country submits to the teaching of Lao-tzu, they will be exterminated as a matter of course.[57]

These criticisms were formulated during a period of disunity marked by widespread violence and massacres between Chinese and foreign intruders following the conquest of the north of the country in the third century. Most anti-Buddhist arguments were articulated in the south, where a large number of people had taken refuge, escaping from the foreign invasions.

Migrations beyond the Yangzi moved the cultural centre south to the newly-acquired territories.

Although this train of thought was limited in its appeal, it reappeared occasionally throughout Chinese history, particularly when the elite's position was menaced by a foreign creed. The political threat posed by alien invasion or foreign religions challenged the traditional ideal of cultural universalism. Such a threat could generate a defensive reaction leading to the adoption of beliefs clustered around the negative pole of the dominant value-system, as was to reoccur during the Song dynasty.

Song loyalism

The Jurchen empire of the Jin, originally based in Manchuria, invaded the north of China in 1126. The Song were unable to resist the nomad cavalry and had to retreat south of the Yangzi: this was the second partition of the empire between an alien conqueror and the Chinese. The Song retained the Yangzi valley and everything south of it.

The philosophical controversies of the Southern Song (1127–1279) were concerned mainly with the self-preservation of the dynasty by means of adopting conciliatory policies towards the Jin. Discarding the traditional tribute system, officials from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries pursued a realistic and pragmatic foreign policy: neighbouring states were accepted as equals. The realistic appraisal of powerful states, however, did not prevent officials from continuing to despise foreigners as 'barbarians'. According to Herbert Franke, 'the principle of reciprocity in diplomatic relations with these states was nothing more than an enforced concession, which was but grudgingly granted because of the Sung's military weakness.'[58] Internal official records and private correspondence remained full of traditional imagery: foreigners were referred to as inferior people, 'barbarians', 'caitiffs' or simply 'animals'.[59] Although equality with neighbouring states was recognised, Tao Jing-shen has noticed the appearance of a nationalistic imagery which was critical, for instance, of intermarriage with the Khitan (a group from Manchuria), a practice normally favoured by the imperial court.[60]

Despite the official rhetoric of equality, some uncompromising scholars based their arguments in favour of recovering the lost territories on 'anti-barbarian' grounds. Chen Liang (1143–94), a utilitarian theorist who argued

against the philosophical speculations of Neo-Confucianists, wanted to restore the north to the control of the Song by driving out the Jin. Chen, like other pragmatic scholars of the Southern Song, searched for practical elements in the literary heritage that could lead to a stronger state and a better society. According to Hoyt Tillman, Chen's denigration of foreigners was closely related to anti-Buddhist literature.[61] His call to expel the barbarian also rested on a belief in environmental determinism. Different environments had different spatial energies (*qi*), and only China possessed the central and most beneficial one in the cosmos. Foreigners had an inferior energy that perverted the spatial energy of the Central Plain. Chen Liang expounded his ideas to the emperor in a memorandum:

> Your obedient servant ventures to suggest that only China (*Zhongguo*)—the standard energy (*zhengqi*) of heaven and earth—is that which the heavenly mandate to rule (*tianming*) endows, where the hearts of the people gather, where the rituals of civilisation cluster, and that which kings and emperors have inherited for a hundred generations. Is it at all conceivable that [such a country] could be violated by the perverse energy (*xieqi*) of the barbarians? … The pure air of heaven and earth has been restricted and enveloped by the offensive odor of sheep and goats [of nomadic barbarians] and for long has not attained release; it surely must and will vent itself. The hearts of the people and the mandate to rule are certainly not long confinable to a peripheral area of the world.[62]

Ye Shi (1150–1223), a friend of Chen Liang and author of several utilitarian studies, was even more outspoken about the Jin.[63] Ye, like Chen, was attracted by a strand of learning called *jingshi*, 'practical statecraft'. This was characterised by a focus on concrete results in statecraft and the practical application of Confucian scholarship. His 'Postscript', written shortly before his death, contained several programmes of action against the Jurchen. Ye urged the emperor to issue a proclamation inciting the Northerners to abandon the enemy armies. The Song government should also pay a bounty of five hundred strings of cash for each head of a dead 'barbarian' (*huren*). Decapitation of the enemy would force his withdrawal to the northern steppes. Ye Shi abandoned the traditional notion of barbarians versus Chinese and attempted to see Song-Jin relations in more realistic terms. 'Within the microcosm of Ye Shih's mind, Confucian cultural universalism had to be dethroned before militant nationalism could hold sway,' writes his biographer Winston Wan Lo.[64]

China was finally united in 1279, but not quite in the way the Southern Song had anticipated. The Mongols, whose invasions had started in 1235, reunified the country by conquest and ruled it until 1368 as the Yuan

dynasty. The Mongols divided the population of the empire into four official categories: the Mongols, the *semu* (‘coloured eyes’, Western and Central Asians), the *Hanren* (‘Han people’ or Northern Chinese, Khitans, Jurchens and Koreans), and the *Nanren* (‘Southerners’). Scholars have not been able to agree on the exact meaning of these terms. Whereas some believe that the Mongol hierarchy denotes ethnic differences, others describe it as a reflection of geopolitical divisions.[65]

Chinese officials were summoned to serve the Mongol administration. Many Confucian scholars participated actively in public service, but some Song loyalists (*yimin*) withdrew from public life. They sought refuge in Daoist monasteries in south China and refused to serve an alien conqueror. Deng Mu and Ye Lin died in 1305 after starving themselves for two months in response to an imperial edict to serve the government.[66]

Although Song loyalism was motivated largely by political and moral considerations, Frederick Mote has noticed that ‘an incipient racism made brief appearance, contradicting in its spirit the traditional patronising Chinese attitude toward “barbarian” neighbours.’[67] Hu Han (1307–91), a scholar concerned with the reappraisal of the empire’s relations towards foreigners, invoked the traditional criteria of the *Chunqiu*, based on a strict dichotomy between Chinese and barbarian rule.[68] Though he was far from renouncing the myth of the barbarian, his repudiation of the Mongols was close to that of Ye Shi. Hu also insisted on the institution of the lineage (*zu*) as a system of social regulation within the empire.[69]

Most remarkable was a bitter denunciation by Zheng Sixiao (1239–1316), whose work was found buried in an iron box near Suzhou during the late Ming period. It described the Mongols as being ‘of a non-human origin’ (*fei renlei*) and compared them to ‘dogs and goats’.[70] The authenticity of this work has been disputed, but it should be remembered that most of the proponents of anti-foreign theories had to write in secret for fear of persecution. The works of these authors have often been lost, if not voluntarily destroyed, resulting in a certain imbalance in the available literary evidence.[71]

Fang Xiaoru wrote after the fall of the Mongol Yuan dynasty and the foundation of the Ming dynasty in 1368. Under the influence of Hu Han, he also made a categorical distinction between Chinese and barbarians: ‘To elevate them to a position above the Chinese people would be to lead the

world to animaldom. If a dog or a horse were to occupy a human's seat, even small boys would be angry and take a club to them… Why? Because the general order would be confused.'[72] John Fincher believes that a '"racist" strain dominates Fang's metaphors though culturalism retains a hold on his logic.'[73]

Fang Xiaoru insisted that the emperor could not be a barbarian. But he also considered Chinese usurpers, of which Wang Mang (first century AD) was a prototype, as 'barbarians'. His anti-foreign sentiment was still much embedded in a cultural tradition. It was only under the Qing that physical features, real or imagined, became a significant factor in the delineation of the barbarian, bringing about a major departure from the cultural norms which traditionally prevailed.

Anti-Manchuism

In 1644, a Manchu emperor ascended the throne in Beijing and founded the Qing dynasty, which was to last until its collapse in 1911. The conquest of China by this frontier people was met with a wide range of responses. The north was occupied without marked opposition. Hard-pressed by popular revolts and banditry, officials were quick to surrender, some even welcoming the Manchus as the restorers of law and order. These officials were placed in leading positions in an administration that retained most of its Chinese characteristics. In the south, however, resistance against the invader was actively organised by a rebellious gentry. It took the new dynasty several decades to conquer the regions below the Yangzi. Yunnan was captured only in 1682. Thousands of scholars loyal to the previous dynasty were massacred, and many retired from official life after the failure of the rebellion. Among these retired scholars, some developed loyalist ideas characterised by deep hostility to the Manchus as a group of people. Gu Yanwu (1613–82), for instance, refused to serve the new dynasty. He refuted the idea that barbarians could be morally transformed and emphasised the sense of shame in serving a barbarian ruler.[74] The strict separation of barbarians and Chinese into distinct spheres, where each could live in accordance with their innate character, was unavoidable.[75] Lü Liuliang (1629–83), a scholar from Zhejiang province, entered the Buddhist monkhood after the Manchu conquest. Most of his anti-Manchu ideas were elaborated in commentaries on the Confucian classics. From 1728 to 1732

he became the focus of an official campaign which attempted to suppress literati who continued to insist on ethnic differences between the Manchus and the Chinese.[76] Lü was accused of having distorted the classics in order to propagate anti-Manchu views.[77] His corpse was disinterred and decapitated by imperial edict in 1733.

The most virulent critic of alien rule was Wang Fuzhi (1619–92). Wang withdrew into seclusion after the failure of an uprising against the Manchus which he had led in Hunan, and devoted most of his energy to writing. He recast traditional ideas concerning environmental determinism and the difference in nature of the barbarian in a theory about the isolated development of population groups. Most of his philosophical system was based on the concept of ether, the creative force of the universe, which agglomerated to assume different forms and images, strictly differentiated by the concept of category (*lei*):

> They accept what is similar and oppose what is different, and thus all things flourish in profusion and form their various categories. Each of these categories has its own organisation. So it is that dew, thunder, frost, and snow all occur at their proper times, and animals, plants, birds, and fish all keep to their own species… Nor can there be between man and beast, plant and tree, any indiscriminate confusion of their respective principles.[78]

Universal order was based on clear distinctions between categories. This philosophical system had important political implications. If the Chinese did not mark themselves off from the barbarians, the principle of ether would be violated, since they and the barbarians both belonged to different types. Chinese were the 'ether of Heaven' (*tianqi*), whereas the barbarians were 'impure ether' (*jianqi*).[79] The vital distinction between purity and impurity was implicit in the title of Wang's central work, entitled the *Yellow Book* (*Huangshu*) (1656): the last chapter placed the colour yellow (*huangse*), one of the five pure colours, in opposition to mixed colours (*jianse*).[80] China was named the 'yellow centre' (*huangzhong*). Distinctions between Chinese and barbarians could not be blurred. Everything distinguished them:

> Chinese and barbarians are born in different places, which brings about the differences in their atmospheres, which in turn are responsible for the differences in their customs. When their customs are different, their understanding and behaviour are all different.[81]

The purity of categories (*qinglei*) had to be preserved by strict boundaries (*juezhen*) around a specific living space (*dingwei*). The territory of the Chinese was the 'middle region' (*zhongqu*) or 'divine region' (*shenqu*): 'North of the deserts, west of the Yellow River, south of Annam, east of the sea, the ether is different, people have a different essence, nature produces different things.'[82] The first duty of the emperor was to keep the boundaries between categories clear:

> Now even the ants have rulers who preside over the territory of their nests and, when red ants or flying white ants penetrate their gates, the ruler organises all his own kind into troops to bite and kill the intruders, drive them far away from the anthill and prevent foreign interference.[83]

This famous metaphor seems to be unique and should not be viewed as distinct from the wider perspective of Wang's work.[84] The idea of purity, however, pervaded most of his political thought. Its logical consequence was the rejection of the notion of cultural universalism and the exclusion of other population groups from the divine soil of the Middle Kingdom.[85]

Wang claimed that the Manchus had exploited the emperorship in order to enforce artificially a proximity of foreign peoples with the Chinese. On this point, his historical analysis converged with the discussions of Song Lian and Fang Xiaoru. In fact, ethnological discourse about the barbarians was officially encouraged by the Ming at the dawn of the seventeenth century. In order to understand the moral character of contemporary tribal peoples, their ancestors were studied in the *Zuozhuan* and the *Chunqiu*. The repository for such knowledge was the *siyiguan* (four barbarians' bureaux) and the dynastic histories.[86] The majority of anti-Manchu works were banned by the *siku quanshu* (Four Treasuries) project under the Qing, but were revived by the reformers and the revolutionaries at the end of the dynasty. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Ming loyalists came to be highly regarded by a growing number of young intellectuals. Mao Zedong, for instance, joined a Wang Fuzhi study society in Hunan, his home province.

The idea of group was expressed in categorical terms such as *qun*, 'herd', 'group' or 'flock', and *lei*, 'type', 'sort', 'class', and in terms of fictive ancestry like *zu*, 'lineage'. Originally, *zu* had two distinct meanings: a small descent group tied by a blood relationship like the family or the clan; and a larger group of people inhabiting the same territory.[87] Later, the term came

to express the idea of lineage. *Zu*, with is strong connotation of horizontal continuity maintained by ancestor worship, was particularly emphasised by Wang. The term could be translated into English as 'race', a term similarly dominated by the idea of lineage in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. As Europe emerged from the Middle Ages, it continued to be dominated by a Church that regulated every aspect of life. The Bible was read regularly; Adam was considered the ancestor of humankind. John Foxe, in his *Book of Martyrs* (1570), wrote that men were of 'the race and stocke of Abraham'.[88] In the context of the seventeenth century, 'race' and *zu* are etymologically and semantically similar enough to be compared with each other. While Adam's lineage had spread and populated the three known continents of the world, the Chinese *zu* was confined to the Middle Kingdom.

Elite attitudes towards outsiders were fraught with ambivalence. On the one hand, a claim to cultural universalism led leading scholars to assert that the barbarian could be 'sinicised', or transformed by the beneficial influence of culture and climate. On the other hand, when their sense of cultural superiority was threatened, the elite appealed to categorical differences in nature to expel the barbarian and to seal the country off from the perverting influences of the outside world.

The defensive reaction remained exceptional. Scholars who wrote about categorical differences between the Mongols, the Manchus and the Chinese remained in the minority. And apart from Buddhism, which had spread through China during a period of disorder, no serious challenge had ever affected the elite's faith in the Confucian classics. It was only in the nineteenth century that the Confucian universe would gradually disintegrate in the face of a complex combination of factors.

2

RACE AS TYPE (1793–1895)

During the nineteenth century, a new social environment was shaped in China by a multitude of factors. Population growth, social dislocation, popular rebellions, administrative fragmentation and political crises combined to create a pattern of internal decline. Foreign intrusions from the Opium War (1839–42) onwards further weakened the Qing.

The arrival of Westerners in the first half of the nineteenth century also impinged upon pre-existing tensions between various trends of Confucianism. In the eighteenth century, discontent with imperial orthodoxy among Qing scholars led to the flourishing of an alternative school of thought that emphasised evidential research (*kaozhengxue*) at the expense of philosophical speculation.[1] This school attacked the dominant Neo-Confucian ideology and hoped to reconstruct original Confucianism as formulated by the sage-kings of antiquity. Encouraged by the Jesuits' introduction of modern science during the late Ming and early Qing, the evidential research movement was also characterised by a concern with precise scholarship and practical matters. It was interested in linguistics, astronomy, mathematics, geography and epigraphy. The assault of evidential research on Neo-Confucian orthodoxy would lead to the theoretical rejection of the entire Confucian legacy during the New Culture Movement at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The evidential research movement also set the stage for the social and political conclusions drawn by the New Text movement.[2] The revival of former Han New Text Confucianism in the eighteenth century led to the forging of an ideological framework for statecraft reform at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Well before the first Opium War, New Text scholars were seeking pragmatic solutions to organisational breakdown in the empire.

Seen from the perspective of these scholarly developments, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were an age of profound transition for the Confucian world. The intrusion of the West increased existing tensions between different schools of thought and accelerated the deliquescence of the Confucian tradition as a whole. The presence of Europeans, supported by military strength, economic power and organisational ability, confronted the Confucian elite with a divergent symbolic universe. By their very existence, they demonstrated that the Confucian worldview was purely relative. Chinese scholars increasingly discovered that the Confucian universe in which they operated was neither total nor absolute. Thus reform-minded scholars from Wei Yuan (1794–1856) to Kang Youwei (1858–1927) responded both to developments of particular schools of thought within the Confucian world and to the confrontation of this tradition as a whole with the West.

It would be arbitrary to assign a date to the confrontation of imperial cosmology with a Christian universe. There was never a 'clash' between China and the West, only a gradual phenomenon of interaction. As a concession to periodisation, one could tentatively consider the Macartney mission to the Qianlong court in 1793 as a point of departure. The failure of the British mission was partly due to divergent visions of court ritual. Imperial cosmology, for instance, emphasised a social hierarchy in which foreign powers had to pay tribute to the emperor, whereas Europeans stressed the values of openness and equality.[3] Naito Konan, a leading sinologist at the beginning of the twentieth century, also began his analysis of the racial issue in late imperial China with the Macartney mission.[4]

The threat posed by Western military and economic power during the nineteenth century was significant, though it never amounted to a process of colonisation. The military dimension comprised a series of short but violent campaigns that resulted in two treaties. At the end of the first 'Opium War', the treaty of Nanjing ceded a barren island called Hong Kong to Britain and opened five ports to British residence and trade. The privileges granted to foreign powers in this treaty (mainly extraterritoriality, an indemnity, taxation rights and most-favoured-nation treatment) were based on concessions made to the Khan of Kokand in Xinjiang between 1831 and 1835.[5] The Nanjing agreement was thus part of a general change in frontier policy initiated by the Qing as well as the result of an unequal treaty exacted by foreign imperialism. The Anglo-French invasion and the second

treaty settlement (1857–60) enlarged the scope and nature of foreign activities in China and opened most of the empire to Western contact. Two decades later, the French took Vietnam, China's principal tributary in the south. Foreign military threats, however, never matched the intensity, scope and duration of China's internal military challenges, such as the Taiping war (1850–64), described as the most destructive war in the nineteenth century, with casualties of at least twenty million. The economic impact of the West, on the other hand, was diffuse. Some historians, in reaction to overstated claims about 'economic imperialism', have described it as 'a flea in the elephant's ear'.[6] Others have shown how Chinese merchants benefited from the transport and banking facilities provided by foreign companies and developed their enterprises in symbiosis with European partners.

The development of racial categorisations during the nineteenth century, however, was due in large part to internal developments. Pamela Kyle Crossley has convincingly demonstrated that a sense of identity through descent became important to the Qing court in the eighteenth century. By the Qianlong period (1736–95), the Manchu court was progressively turning towards a rigid taxonomy of culturally distinct 'races' (*zu*) within China. The reasons for this increasingly racial orientation are complex, as Crossley's article on the Chinese martial banners demonstrates. In short, as the cultural identity of the Manchus started eroding after nearly a century of settlement in China, blood ties became increasingly important to maintain their status as conquerors and enforce legal segregation against the Chinese population. Genealogy and blood replaced Manchu language, martial culture and north-eastern religion, all of which were in apparent decline. The promotion of 'race' as a taxonomic element had some roots in the caste system of the Liao (907–1125) and Yuan (1260–1368) dynasties, but overall it was new to the Qing policies of the late eighteenth century.[7]

Besides the court's concern with racial categorisation, it has also been noted that ethnic prejudice permeated different levels of society during the first half of the nineteenth century. According to Mark Elliott, whose research focuses on nineteenth-century Jiangnan, ethnic rivalry and prejudice existed well before the Opium War.[8] The threshold for the articulation of ethnic hostilities was the Taiping war, which was derived partly from Hakka-Punti hostility. The anti-Manchu arguments that had been developed by Ming loyalists during the seventeenth century struck a

popular chord with the Taiping.[9] They were also influenced by heterodox religions, mainly millenarian Buddhism and Protestant Christianity.

Despite these developments there was no systematic, recognisable discourse of 'race' in China until the 1890s. What existed were at best vague categorisations or defensive stereotypes, only indirectly comparable to European racial ideas of the first half of the nineteenth century. Before Darwin, Europeans divided mankind into several permanent racial types, each of which was believed to have existed without change since its creation on earth.[10] Although such typology can be found in an embryonic form in nineteenth-century China, it never achieved a significant level of theorisation. The word 'type' is used here rather as a synonym for stereotype, or the simplified image which a given social group has about outsiders.

Before we look at these racial images it is important to bear in mind that only a section of the governing elite felt compelled to reduce outsiders to manageable stereotypes. How ordinary people reacted or participated in the formulation of this imagery is an important question which still remains to be investigated. It may be hypothesised, however, that a certain degree of reciprocal influence existed between elite and popular culture. Whereas the governing elites could appropriate ideas formulated at a popular level, it is equally plausible that the racial imagery found in official texts filtered down the social hierarchy. It would be more fruitful to describe relations between elite culture and popular culture as a phenomenon of circularity,[11] or constant interaction, rather than as one of strict autarchy. Furthermore, as Berger and Luckmann have pointed out, the coexistence of a more or less naive mythology at a popular level with a more sophisticated cosmology among the elite often serves to maintain the *same* symbolic universe.[12]

Demonology

A common historical response to serious threats directed towards a symbolic universe is 'nihilation', or the conceptual liquidation of everything inconsistent with official doctrine. Foreigners were labelled 'barbarians' or 'devils' in order to be conceptually eliminated. The official rhetoric reduced the European to a devil, a ghost, an unreal goblin hovering on the border of humanity. Many texts of the first half of the nineteenth century referred to the English as 'foreign devils' (*yangguizi*), 'devil slaves'

(*guinu*), 'barbarian devils' (*fangui*), 'island barbarians' (*daoyi*), 'blue-eyed barbarian slaves' (*biyan yinu*), or 'red-haired barbarians' (*hongmaofan*). Officials in Canton wrote that 'even though the people have had social intercourse with the barbarians, they still call them *fan-kuei*. They do not even consider them to be human beings.'[13] The only English textbook available in the bookshops near the factories in Canton was simply called *Devils' Talk*.[14] On a more sophisticated level, Wang Kaiyun (1833–1916), a celebrated scholar from Hunan province, compared foreigners to matter (*wu*), an entity without life.[15] The idea of foreigners as devils, which permeated official rhetoric until the beginning of the 1860s, was important enough to incite missionaries to contribute articles in Chinese on the correct distinction between humans and ghosts.[16]

Dehumanisation of the enemy is a process common to all societies. During religious violence in early modern France, for instance, the state's enemies were transformed into 'vermin' or 'devils' before being dragged through the streets and having their genitalia mutilated and their limbs chopped off.[17] Diabolisation of the enemy not only sanctioned violence, it also enhanced group cohesion. In the face of foreign threats, collective identity was promoted by dividing the world into subhuman aliens and human Chinese. It is legitimate to wonder to what extent the use of derogatory terminology in China reflected genuine feelings of superiority or merely a passive compliance with an established discourse. As with most historical texts of this sort, it is difficult to distinguish personal feelings from official rhetoric. The whole question of the 'reality' of a belief, however, seems a somewhat empty one: the existence of a textual discourse reflects a certain consciousness. It is this consciousness which is of interest to the social historian, not the personal state of mind of an author. Even if some officials did not 'really' believe in the barbarian nature of foreigners, they actively participated in the maintenance of a hierarchical consciousness by accepting a discourse based on the notion of foreign inferiority.

Invaders were perceived as demons as early as the Song dynasty. Japanese scholarship even traces the foreign-demon in Daoism to the late fourth century AD. Timothy Barrett points out that, although there is no clear evidence for the existence of an indigenous tradition of fundamentalist religious racism, the equation of invaders with demons by the populace in

seventeenth-century China is to be taken seriously.[18] There is nothing to suggest that this perception was much altered during the first half of the nineteenth century. Both popular religion and elite rhetoric demonised the foreigner in an attempt to maintain a common symbolic universe.

Teratology

Skin colour performed an important function of social differentiation in demonological terminology. 'The Chinese call the barbarians "devils", and differentiate them according to their skin colour,' wrote Xu Shidong (1814–73) in the 1840s.[19] There were 'white devils' (*baigui*) and 'black devils' (*heigui*), presumably the Indian Sepoy troops in the service of the British. 'The white ones are cold and dull as the ashes of frogs, the black ones are ugly and dirty as coal,' explained Jin He (1819–85).[20] White ash and black coal, both were the teratological facets of the same unreality: the foreign demon.

Social position distinguished whites from blacks: 'Black devils are slaves, white devils are rulers,' commented one author.[21] The origin of the black devil was not always clear, as one report on the British troops in Ningbo testifies: 'They carry off young men, shave their heads, paint their bodies with black lacquer, give them a drug which makes them dumb, and so turn them into black devils, using them to carry heavy loads.'[22]

Within elite culture, a well-established aesthetic value system contributed to the rise of racial categorisation. Prose and poetry derided the physical appearance of the foreigner. For example:

> When the foreign devil entered China, he heaved a first sigh: he saw the elegantly chiselled features of the Chinese, embodiment of human feelings, neatly dressed and capped. The foreigner and the Chinese are greatly different! The foreign devil heaved a second sigh when he looked in the mirror… yellow hair on the head, curly hair on the body, green eyes. Disconsolately sitting head in hand, he looks like a monkey goblin![23]

In official documents as well as in poetry, descriptions of outsiders were highly stereotyped, often merely repeating the age-old clichés traditionally reserved for frontier peoples. The terse formula 'blue eyes black beard' (*biyanwuxu*), in which both colours could vary, was common. Wang Zhongyang, for instance, pictured the English as having the beak of an eagle, the eyes of a cat and red hair.[24] His portrayal of the foreigner was

copied from the *Mingshi* (History of the Ming). Wang shared the common belief that the green 'cat' eyes of the foreigner could not stand the sunlight, and had to remain shut at noon. Another poet, writing during the Opium War, found that the eyes of the foreign ghost were 'blue and dizzy'.[25] For one observer, 'the white ones are really ghosts; the sounds of their speech are similar to birds, their shins and chest are covered with hair, their green eyes suffer when they look in the distance'.[26] A popular text entitled *Short Study of the English Red-Haired Barbarians* expressed the belief that foreign soldiers 'cannot run, as their legs and feet are bandaged, and are difficult to bend or to stretch; if they fall forward, they cannot rise again: this is why they often suffer from a bleeding nose [in other words, are often defeated in battle]'.[27] This cliché was repeatedly used at the highest levels,[28] for instance by Yuqian (1793–1841), the governor-general of Liang-Jiang who had tortured several British captives to death during the Opium War. Statecraft scholars like Bao Shichen (1775–1855) questioned such a belief,[29] but it was still being put forward by some high-ranking officials at the end of the nineteenth century.[30] It was a remarkably long-lived idea. In 1949, when an Anglo-Chinese girl returned to China to join the communist revolution, her room-mates in the army assailed her with questions: 'Is it true English people only have one straight bone in the leg and can't bend their knees?'[31]

Anatomy

Speculation about the physiology of foreigners confirmed their inborn inadequacy. Some scholars asserted that their digestive system was dependent on tea and rhubarb. Without these two fundamental ingredients, the barbarian would become blind or would suffer from serious intestinal diseases. This misconception prevailed among a number of scholar-officials after the Opium War.[32]

Popular imaginary was stimulated by the relative lack of familiarity with anatomical knowledge until the middle of the nineteenth century.[33] The human body was considered a gift from the ancestors that should be preserved intact; mutilation or dissection of a corpse was perceived as disrespectful to the whole lineage. Traditional medicine merely hinted at human organs in their analogical relation to cosmological elements.[34] Only

by the end of the eighteenth century did a Chinese doctor begin to record human anatomy scientifically. Wang Qingren (1768–1831) dissected a number of corpses which he had obtained after an epidemic of measles and dysentery in his home province in 1798: 'I thus saw about thirty perfect bodies and in this way I came to know and compare the various parts with the ancient drawings and found they did not agree.'[35] When he finally published a small volume on his work in 1830, he was condemned by colleagues as inhuman, sadistic and mad.[36]

The absence of common anatomical knowledge lent itself to speculation about foreign physiology. An erotic novel of the eighteenth century, for instance, wondered whether the European body functioned in the same way as that of the Chinese.[37] The comparison may have been carried out in a tone of jest, but some scholars took the idea seriously. Yu Zhengxie (1775–1840), a major scholar noted for his strong interest in research and his liberal ideas, observed the following differences between the foreigner and the Chinese:

- Foreigners had four lobes in the lungs, Chinese had six.
- Foreigners had only four chambers in the heart, Chinese had seven.
- The liver of the foreigner was located at the right side of the heart, the Chinese liver was situated at the left.
- The foreigner had four testicles, Chinese had two.[38]

Such stereotypes were clearly echoed by popular culture in Europe. It was not uncommon, for instance, to believe that Chinese women had horizontal vaginas, somehow matching their eyes. Until the 1860s, a number of Chinese women were displayed in zoos and exhibitions. A Chinese lady ('with small lotus feet, only 2.5 inches in length!') was exhibited in Hyde Park from 1843 to 1851.[39]

Driven by the vigour of his four testicles, the satyr-like foreigner was relentless in his pursuit of pleasure. Anti-Christian leaflets spread the idea that followers of the foreign faith practised sodomy with their fathers and brothers and fornicated with their mothers and sisters. 'During the first three months of life the anuses of all [Christian] infants—male and female—are plugged up with a small hollow tube, which is taken out at night. They call this "retention of the vital essence". It causes the anus to dilate so that upon growing up sodomy will be facilitated.' Celestials became the objects of the devil's licentiousness. Women were ravished in the

confessional. Young boys were abducted by missionaries to be sodomised, claimed another anti-Christian pamphlet.[40] It was also alleged that Christians gave female converts aphrodisiacs and initiated them in the pleasures of sex; they would then despise their husbands.[41]

Many Chinese were struck by the hairy appearance of foreigners. Centuries before, the bearded missionaries had already made a durable impression. Giulio Aleni, for instance, had been described as a 'man with blue eyes and the beard of a dragon' during his first visit to Fujian province between 1625 and 1639.[42] Hair became a focal point in descriptions of foreigners after the Opium War. The New Text adherent Lin Zexu (1785–1850), the Imperial Commissioner appointed to suppress the Canton opium trade, focused on beards in his diary: 'They have heavy beards, much of which they shave, leaving one curly tuft, which at first sight creates a surprising effect. Indeed, they do really look like devils; and when the people of these parts call them "devils" it is no mere empty term of abuse.'[43] Zhigang, head of the first diplomatic mission to the West from 1866 to 1870, confided to his journal that he was shocked by the natives of Ceylon, whose 'black hair, about four centimetres long, covers their chest and all of their back.'[44]

Fixation on hair transcended the private realm of the diary. In 1848, Xu Jiyu (1795–1873), governor of Fujian province, published an influential work on world geography, in which Europeans were described as follows:

> Europeans are tall and fair-skinned. They have high noses, recessed sockets and yellow eyes (some have black eyes). Their hair is often left on the temples or coiled around the cheeks. Some have it straight like Chinese, some have curly whiskers, some are entirely shaven, some leave it long, some separate the whiskers and the moustache like the Chinese. Young and old alike, the hair is worn about ten centimetres long; it is cut when it is longer. Hair and beards are often yellow or red (during the Ming, the Dutch were called 'red-haired', and recently the English too have been called 'red-haired', both because their hair is yellowish-reddish. However, all Europeans are like this, not only people from these two countries). Some of them have black hair (those with black hair also have black eyes). This is also true for the hair and eyes of girls.[45]

During the second half of the nineteenth century, there were further detailed descriptions of foreign hair to satisfy the curious reader. Zhang Deyi (1847–1919) reported from Europe that 'when about twenty years old, the moustache and beard of foreign men start to grow. As a rule, they do not cut or shave them, allowing them to develop. At the age of fifty or sixty, either they start to trim the moustache, or they cut both moustache and

beard, as it is said that when men become older and weaker, there is no further need to wear them, as they hinder whilst drinking or eating.'[46] Foreign women were thought to suffer from excess hair.[47] In France, noticed Zhang, 'many women have long beards and moustaches.'[48]

The pictorial world of late imperial China, situated at the privileged juncture of high culture and folk beliefs, also teemed with furry bogeymen. Picture-story books for popular consumption, called *lianhuan tuhua*, started depicting foreigners from the Ming onwards.[49] A booklet on Macau, popular in the south during the eighteenth century, included ten drawings of 'various barbarians'.[50] Bearded, moustached and whiskered, tall like a vision, with a conch-like nose and squinting eyes, the Westerner loomed regularly in the iconography of exotic countries during the late Qing.[51] From the xenophobic drawings of the Qing to the anti-imperialist cartoons of the People's Republic, visions of the foreign would be dominated by the stigma of hair. This early fixation was also due to a difference in customs, as can be seen from a missionary's description of a barber in the Middle Kingdom at the end of the 1880s:

> The streets of every town abound in barbers, who find plenty of work shaving the heads and faces of the natives. It is not considered good form to grow a moustache till a man is about forty years of age, and even then probably only half-a-dozen straggling hairs will appear on each side, while only old men wear a beard. The Chinese barber shaves every nook and cranny of the face with great care, even to the eyelid, nose, and ear, both inside and out.[52]

Odour was another characteristic of many foreigners. The nausea induced by sea travel and lax standards of hygiene among many Europeans certainly did nothing to lessen the initial shock of encounter. In texts concerning the Opium War, the arrival of foreign troops was usually announced by an 'atmosphere of demons' (*yaofen*) and a 'wind carrying the smell of rotten fish' (*xingfeng*). At a lower level, the influential anti-Christian tract *Bixie jishi* (1861) spread the idea that Westerners used to drink the menstrual blood of women, which they regarded as a precious gift conferred by God: this explained their unbearable stench.[53] Such imagery rested upon genuine sensitivities, as foreign reports testify. One European was warned not to be shocked if a Chinese lady held a handkerchief to her nose, 'for you as a foreigner are credited with a nasty smell.'[54] John Hardy commented that 'what they call our European odour is quite as nauseous to them as their

yellow smell [sic] is to us',[55] a comment that revealed a prejudice common among Europeans.

Geography

Interest in more pragmatic scholarship had been revived by the evidential research movement in the eighteenth century. Knowledge of world geography, however, remained minimal until the middle of the nineteenth century. Before the skirmishes with the English in Canton in the early 1840s, scholar-officials were dependent on a small number of works for elementary geography. They were Chen Lunjiong's *Record of Things Seen and Heard about the Maritime Countries* (*Haiguo wenjian lu*, 1730), Wang Dahai's *Annals of the Barbarian Maritime Islands* (*Haidao yizhi*, 1760), and Xie Qinggao's *Maritime Record* (*Hailu*, 1820). All three were based on the traditional barbarian imagery that had been passed down for hundreds of years. The widely used work of Chen Lunjiong, for instance, still referred to 'red-haired barbarians' and 'black devils'. These books were based on distorted information copied from previous compilations. For example, was England another name for Holland or was it a dependency of Holland? Portugal was near Malacca. France was originally Buddhist, later turned Catholic, and was finally believed to be the same as Portugal.[56]

During the 1840s, scholar-officials directly involved in foreign affairs became increasingly aware of the need for more accurate information. Lin Zexu and New Text Confucianists such as Xu Jiyu or Wei Yuan compiled more pragmatic descriptions of the outside world. Their work, however, was fraught with ambivalence. On the one hand, they actively contributed to the dissolution of sinocentrism by relativising their own universe's position: they revealed that China was only one nation among many others. On the other hand, their view of outsiders was influenced by long-standing stereotypes. The *Yinghuan zhilüe*, for instance, was a geographical account compiled from various European and Chinese sources by Xu Jiyu in 1848. Despite his personal contacts with foreigners in Xiamen, the author still believed that 'the hair and eyes of some [foreigners] gradually turn black when they come to China and stay for a long time. The features of such men and women half-resemble the Chinese.'[57]

Compensation characterised these early attempts at building a different worldview. 'In his discussion of the continents, he [Xu Jiyu] attempted to

compensate for China's occupation of only a corner, and control of less than a half, of Asia by observing that Asia was the largest of the world's continents. He also felt compelled to deliver an opening statement on China's magnificence.'[58] Wei Yuan's treatise adopted a traditional vocabulary and categorised the world in ocean-regions that were in conformity with the classical image of China as a centred maritime world.[59] Africa was represented in strongly negative terms. Xu Jiyu's account presented the continent as a desperately chaotic place, inhabited by retrograde black barbarians. 'It is scorching, miasmic and pestilential. Its climate and its people are the worst of the four continents.' Ethiopians were described as animals 'living in holes and catching insects for food.'

In West Africa, people 'go half naked, not covering their genitals', freely coupling 'without distinguishing races' (*zhongzu wu bie*); enslaved, they 'never complain and never try to escape',[60] a remark that echoed the legends on the kunlun slave. Others compared Africa to the *hundun*, or Chaos, the primeval state of the universe according to Chinese folklore.[61] Tan Sitong (1865–98), a brilliant philosopher who would become one of the most radical reformers during the 1890s, also resorted to traditional concepts to divide the world into three regions in his 'Views on the Management of World Affairs' (1889). China, Korea, Tibet, Vietnam and Burma formed the core of the universe, called *huaxia zhi guo*, or Chinese states; Japan, Russia, Europe and North America constituted the *yidi zhi guo*, or States of the Barbarians; and Africa, South America and Australia were relegated to the lowest category, the *qinshou zhi guo*, or States of the Beasts.[62]

The portrayal of foreign countries in the popular press was also replete with contempt for 'barbarian' parts of the world like India and Africa, indicating that these stereotypes were not confined to the elite.[63] Popular encyclopedias, called *riyong leishu*, channelled elite prejudice down to the lower levels of popular culture. Similar to European almanacs, they dealt with household affairs, elementary education, sample contract forms for ordinary people and clan regulations. They also provided information on a range of topics that included food, clothes and travel routes.[64] Sakai Tadao, who has investigated these popular encyclopedias in detail, noted that sections on foreign barbarians were common even under the Ming.[65]

Typology

Foreigners travelling in China after the Opium War were generally met with alarm. 'Indeed it was painful to observe the undue timidity that men, women, and children of all classes evinced at the sight of the foreigner […] At fifty yards off, my appearance was the signal for women to bolt into their houses with screaming children and bar the doors […] A crowd of gaping mouths and staring eyes would follow at a distance.'[66]

Those who finally discovered that the foreigners' legs were not so stiff that they would simply fall, that they were not stone-blind, and that their faces were not uniformly red still judged their appearance awesome and ugly. 'They vote his large nose ugly, dislike his pale complexion, criticise the color of his eyes, and object to the angle at which they are set.'[67] Foreigners had 'huge feet' and were 'mightily tall'; some had a head 'as large as a bucket'.[68] These initial reactions, the product of a complex interplay between ignorance, fear and prejudice, were rife well into the second half of the twentieth century, especially in the more secluded hinterland. Needless to say, the same type of prejudice against outsiders was also common in Europe and the United States.

The first encounters of Qing envoys abroad with foreigners were equally dominated by fear. Zhang Deyi found that the Mexicans had 'fat features, flat noses and big bones; they are black or yellow. Males and females, old and young, they all look like devils; they are shocking and scaring.'[69] Representatives of three East African countries whom he encountered in London were judged to be 'frightening with their iron faces and silver teeth'.[70] The Manchu dignitary Binchun, travelling abroad for the first time in 1866 in the company of Robert Hart, was scared by the prostitutes of Ceylon. 'They have their hair coiled up in a bun, deep-red lips and faces coloured like pale ink. When they see passing travellers, their laughing dimples, their large teeth and their bare feet frighten people.'[71] Most white sex workers, noted an imperial envoy in the 1890s, 'have big teeth and tousled hair, and are as ugly as devils and as frightening as lionesses. They freeze the hearts of beholders.'[72]

Once over their initial shock, some Qing envoys remained puzzled by the sheer variety of foreign people. They rapidly categorised the complexity of human diversity into more manageable types. Zhang Deyi subdivided the

population of the United States into three groups: those of a black mother and a white father, those of a black mother and a native father, and those of a native mother and a white father.[73] One of the first students to be sent abroad under Yung Wing's auspices in 1872 also divided the American people into three groups: the aborigines, the descendants of the African slaves and the descendants of the English.[74] Li Gui (1842–1903), the Chinese delegate at the Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876, noted in his diary that the European descendants called the Indians 'reds', the Africans 'blacks', and themselves 'whites'.[75]

Not all travellers abroad perceived Europeans as 'white' people. In the north of Europe, wrote Binchun, 'men and women have broad faces and full cheeks, their flesh is reddish purple; they cover themselves with fur and feathers, and greatly resemble the Mongols.'[76] Most observers, however, used the adjective 'white', even though fair skin was sometimes explained in curious ways. Zhigang believed that the European's white skin and red hair was due to daily baths of cold water.[77] Xue Fucheng (1838–94) asserted that the consumption of milk was responsible for the pale skin of European babies.[78]

Qing envoys abroad increasingly referred to themselves as 'yellow'. The exact origins of the notion of a 'yellow race' remain obscure. A Song encyclopaedia of the tenth century recorded a popular legend on the origins of humanity which divided people between noble and ignoble classes: the noble had been made of yellow mud, the ignoble of vulgar rope.[79] In Europe, the notion of a 'yellow race' probably originated at the end of the seventeenth century as a reaction to reports of the Jesuits on the symbolic value of the colour yellow. The concept did not exist in the ancient world, and was not used by travellers of the Middle Ages such as Marco Polo, Pian del Carpini, Bento de Goes, or any of the Arab traders. In 1655, the first European mission to the Qing described the Chinese as having a white complexion, 'equal to the Europeans', except for some people in the south whose skin was 'slightly brown'.[80] When a young inhabitant of the Celestial Kingdom was presented to the court of Louis XIV in 1684, he was described as a 'young Indian'. According to Pierre Huard, the first scientific work in which the notion of a 'yellow race' appeared was François Bernier's 'Etrennes Adressées à Madame de la Sablière pour l'Année

1688'. In this work, Bernier distinguished four 'races', including the 'yellows'.[81]

The notion of a 'yellow race' was rapidly popularised in Western literature during the nineteenth century and reached China through the missionaries. During the early 1890s, mission schools even taught their pupils how to recognise the 'characteristic colours of the various races of mankind' (when asked what the colour of the Chinese was, one boy answered 'human colour').[82] An article on the division of people according to skin colour was finally published in Chinese by several Westerners in 1892.[83]

It would be an oversimplification, however, to suggest that Chinese scholars passively accepted a label invented by European anthropology. Yellow, one of the five 'pure' colours in China, was regarded favourably, since it symbolised fame and progress. Yellow was coupled with the concept of the Middle, probably because the annual deposit of loess from the Gobi desert turned the plains of north China yellow.[84] It also became the colour of the Emperor of the Middle Kingdom, ancestral home of the descendants of the Yellow Emperor. The Yellow River is still regarded in China as a symbol of the country.[85] White, on the other hand, was associated with the West, and symbolised death.

Besides the symbolic values of the colour yellow, it should also be noted that the coding of colours has a direct influence on their visual perception. The Zuni Indians, for instance, frequently confuse yellow and orange as they use the same name for both colours.[86] In China, the term 'yellow' generally covers a much broader range in the spectrum of colours than in Europe and included shades ranging from off white to light brown. Hence, for instance, the description of blond or brown hair as 'yellow'.

In their search for a new form of identity, some scholar-officials turned more and more to the idea of a 'yellow race'. It would become the foundation of a modern, racial taxonomy in 1895, as the following chapter will show in greater detail.

Since the earliest times an extensive barbarian imagery had been elaborated in imperial China. A pervasive but unsystematic racial typology evolved from these traditional ideas in the nineteenth century as a result of an increased emphasis on genealogy by the Qing court, heightened encounters with foreign peoples in the wake of the Opium War and the pursuit of new

knowledge about the outside world. While these developments created a fertile terrain for the reception of racial theories in China, a systematic discourse purporting to classify human beings into different ‘races’ in the name of science only appeared after Japan inflicted a string of defeats on the country in the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5. It was a major blow to the Qing and a cataclyst for far-reaching political changes, starting with an attack on the Confucian tradition.

3

RACE AS LINEAGE (1895–1903)

The late nineteenth century was a period of rapid change in China, characterised by the appearance of a new social structure. The compradors (*maiban*) were one of the more important social groups to emerge in response to new economic opportunities created through contacts with foreign traders.[1] They acted as intermediaries between foreign firms and the domestic market, but they also invested as individual merchants in new sectors of the economy and sometimes managed official enterprises. The compradors performed an important function in the process of economic restructuring. During the decade following the Sino-French War of 1884–85, a number of them started writing on institutional and economic reform, the most notable being Zheng Guanying (1842–1922), He Qi (1859–1914) and Wang Tao (1828–97).[2]

Alongside the compradors, a new class of native merchants and financiers were building their fortunes through overseas trade; by the end of the nineteenth century they had become shareholders and administrators of foreign registered companies. They encouraged the pursuit of foreign studies and sponsored schools with modern curricula, which in turn supported the spread of liberal professions, as people started training as lawyers, physicians or journalists. Scholars began to participate in economic activities, investing in shares, launching enterprises and managing businesses. Sometimes they united with merchants in setting up capitalist enterprises, from which emerged a new social stratum, called the *shenshang*, or gentry-merchants.[3]

The rise to prominence of gentry-merchants was one of the characteristics of the fragmentation of the traditional elite. The growth in the number of scholar-officials after the Taiping war had exacerbated regional disparities, strained social cohesion, affected the exercise of power

and diluted the legitimacy of the existing imperial order. New groups emerged from within the traditional elite. The cleavage between old and new social groups, between north and south, as well as between the rural hinterland and the urban centres took on dramatic proportions during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5.

Japan, still widely considered as a vassal of the empire, dealt a heavy blow to the elite's self-confidence by its overwhelming victory in the war.[4] The Japanese triumph was unexpected, even by those who had been aware of China's shortcomings, and led to an outpouring of patriotic agitation. Memoranda advocating reforms reached the throne after the Shimonoseki peace settlement of 1895. Conservative sectors of the scholarly elite, shocked and angered by the course of events, advocated prolonged warfare and clamoured for the punishment of those responsible for the empire's defeat.

In this atmosphere of intellectual ferment, study societies (*xuehui*) founded by the new elite burgeoned in the urban centres and in the southern provinces. Similar to the *sociétés de pensée* in pre-revolutionary France, study societies published journals and newspapers (*bao* or *xuebao*) to spread reformist ideas. Their main concern was national survival. Polemical essays, news translated from the foreign press and educational articles promoted institutional reform and intellectual renewal. Another task of these study societies was the education and mobilisation of the new urban classes. This urban orientation was reflected in the contents of the journals. Apart from politics, some papers focused on industry (*Gongshang xuebao*), general education (*Tongxuebao*), science (*Gezhi xinhao*), or general world news (*Cuibao*), but also on more popular topics such as literature for children (*Qiuwohao*), erotic fiction (*Qingloubao*) and *demimondaine* gossip (*Youxibao*). The discourse of race as lineage was closely linked to these reform-oriented journals, the rise of a commercial press, the appearance of reform societies and the spread of literacy.

By addressing a social stratum of readers much broader than the traditional scholarly elite, the reform press contributed to the growth of urban nationalism. Whereas traditional scholars had sought to maintain their monopolistic claim to power by restricting access to the esoteric body of Confucian knowledge, their rivals had to convince the reading public of the necessity of reform by spreading their ideas as widely as possible. Their journals reached a nationwide readership, due partly to the patronage of

provincial and prefectural governments. The *Shiwubao*, for instance, had a circulation of 10,000 in April 1898.[5] When the Empress Dowager seized control of the palace in Beijing that same year, many contributors fled abroad or sought safety in foreign concessions in the treaty ports. Thereafter the reform press continued to operate mainly from Japan. Liang Qichao's *Xinmin congbao*, for instance, was circulated in China with minimal difficulties, in spite of an imperial ban. Reprints ran to over a dozen. The fact that the reformers were outlawed merely increased their popularity with the reading public.

The reformers drew on new knowledge from the West, but also on traditional ideas, even as they sought to undermine the legitimacy of Confucianism. Orthodox Confucianism existed largely in isolation from the shifts in the social structure described above, giving rise to a socio-political vacuum which competing groups like the reformers—who supported New Text Confucianism—wished to fill.[6] New Text ideas, which reemerged in the late eighteenth century after centuries of neglect, were used to promote political reform, to attack imperial orthodoxy, and to construct an image of Confucius as a politically oriented sage-king.

The impact of New Text Confucianism in the late nineteenth century was heightened by the resurgence of a trend in scholarship that was highly pragmatic (*shiyong*). The so-called statecraft school (*jingshi*) represented a reaction against certain strains of Confucianism; it emphasised self-improvement and utilitarian statesmanship.

There was also a revival of interest in the classical non-canonical philosophies (*zhuzixue*) of Xunzi and Mozi. Interest in non-canonical ancient texts tended to be more practical than theoretical, and was yet another aspect of the growing moral and practical activism of late Qing scholars. Part of this trend was a revival of Mahayana Buddhism among lay intellectuals. Buddhist studies were characterised by a pragmatic orientation towards personal salvation that favoured syncretism with other indigenous traditions.

Thus it is important to remember that the reform movement was largely the product of complex interactions between different indigenous trends which had little to do with Western learning. However, the explosion of interest in alternative thought systems during this period made it harder to maintain a stable set of meanings for society as a whole. The fragility of the Confucian order thus facilitated the penetration of foreign ideas. Chaos

intruded through the interstices of a symbolic universe in dislocation. People acquired a heightened consciousness of the frailty of meaning. The traditional universe which gave meaning to life was fading away. The deritualisation of Confucian society, like the secularisation of Europe, led to a feeling of alienation and loss of meaning which are so often intrinsic to the modern age.

New Text Confucianism, statecraft scholarship, Mahayana Buddhism and other trends interacted with foreign belief systems and incorporated elements from them. Cultural borrowings, then, should not be explained as passive exposure to 'foreign influence'; rather, they can be viewed as the active creations of local scholars. There was a decision before the borrowing took place and a choice about what should be borrowed. Foreign ideas were assessed against, and integrated within, a pre-existing framework. From this perspective, any attempt at systematic differentiation between 'native thought' and 'Western influence' is in vain. More generally, it is undeniable that the rise of Western power and Western thought systems significantly impinged upon and altered the Confucian symbolic universe.

This chapter looks at the discourse of race as lineage in China from 1895 to 1903. It is confined mainly to the works of the reformers, with special emphasis on Yan Fu, Liang Qichao, Tan Sitong and Kang Youwei. The year 1903 was a turning point marked by the gradual emergence of a virulent nationalism represented by Sun Yatsen and his revolutionary group. The nationalists will be considered separately in the next chapter, which focuses on the discourse of race as nation, along with the reformers' contribution to nationalist discourse and social Darwinism.

Although this chapter is confined to the writings of a small number of reformers, it should be noted that this study does not subscribe to the determining influence of individual writers. Reformers like Yan Fu or Liang Qichao exerted more influence than others, but in essence they were the first to articulate the adaptive changes that were possible at the time: they were the shoots that sprang quicker from a common soil. There was, moreover, a relative homogeneity within the ideas proposed by the reformers. As one contemporary reader observed, 'It was not just that Liang Qichao's writing was good; it was also that what he said seemed to be just what we had stored in our hearts and wished to express ourselves.'[7]

Racial war

The racial typology discussed in the previous chapter only attained a more systematic level of theorisation with the reformers. Yan Fu (1853–1921) was the initiator of a discourse of race based on lineage. He came from a respectable scholar-gentry family from Fujian. The death of his father and a reversal of fortune blocked his path to office through the traditional examination system so he opted for a bleak alternative: Western studies. He joined the Fuzhou shipyard school and was sent to England for two years in the 1870s. Yan embarked on a series of translations of English works in the 1890s. He introduced Darwin and Spencer to a Chinese readership in four essays that appeared in 1895 in *Zhibao*, a new periodical published in Tianjin. In these essays, Yan rejected the traditional distinction between a civilised centre and a barbarian periphery. He disengaged humanity from imperial cosmology to present instead a world divided into a hierarchy of 'races':

> There are four main races on the earth: the yellow, the white, the brown and the black. The yellow race's territory is contiguous with Siberia in the north, extending to the South China Sea, bordered by the Pacific and up to the Kunlun mountains in the west. They have prominent cheek-bones, a shallow nose, long eyes and straight hair. The white race dwells west of the salt lakes of the Urals, on the ancient territory conquered by *Daqin* [Rome]. They have blue eyes and curly hair, a prominent forehead and deep-set eye sockets. On the many islands south of Vietnam, west of Luzon and east of India is the brown race. The black race is the lowest.[8] They live in Africa and in the territories around the tropics. They are the so-called black slaves.[9]

The discourse of race as type was both static and unsystematic. It divided humanity into a vague number of permanent racial types, each of which was thought to have existed unaltered since their appearance on earth. Starting with Yan Fu, the reformers constructed a world which was engaged in a perennial process of evolution. Drawing on the vocabulary of Darwinism, Yan imagined that the 'yellow race' was in a perpetual state of war with other 'races'. Slogans of the survival of the fittest (*youshengliebai*, 'the superior win, the inferior lose') underpinned a bleak vision of racial competition.

Liang Qichao (1873–1929) took Yan Fu's ideas further. He was a precocious student from a farmer-scholar family in the southern coastal province of Guangdong and passed the provincial examinations at the age of sixteen. He later studied under Kang Youwei (1858–1927). In 1894, after failing to pass the metropolitan examination, he turned to foreign studies

instead. In the wake of the defeat of 1895, Liang devoted his energies to study societies and to reform-oriented journals. Most of his articles first appeared in his own periodicals. Liang created a new style of writing, foreshadowing the literary revolution of 1917: he loosened the rigid sentence structure of classical Chinese to reshape it into an elegant yet flexible means of communication. He became a brilliant journalist and exerted a lasting influence on two generations of intellectuals.

For Liang Qichao, 'races' had developed side by side until they eventually engaged in struggle: 'What is history? History is nothing but the account of the development and strife of human races.'[10] Races could be divided into two categories: the historical races (*you lishi de zhongzu*) and the ahistorical races (*fei lishi de zhongzu*). The latter were unable to expand and were subjugated by the former, which were more cohesive and united. The red, brown and black 'races' were eliminated from the stage, leaving the drama of history to the 'yellows' and the 'whites'. The reformers became both prophets of doom and oracles of might and power. The future would be white or yellow.

The idea of a racial war (*zhongzhan*) was only partly specific to the reformers. It had a conceptual precedent in the notion of commercial war (*shangzhan*), which was first propounded in 1862 in the writings of the general and scholar Zeng Guofan (1811–72).[11] It soon won the support of high officials and patriotic merchants in the treaty ports as an alternative to building up military strength, which focused on preparing for an armed confrontation (*bingzhan*). Trade, it was believed, could instead be used as a weapon to resist foreign encroachment. Zheng Guanying, for instance, proposed the fostering of talent, the modernisation of agriculture, the promotion of commerce and the improvement of the merchant's status in society so as better to compete with foreign traders. This strategy echoed the legalist thinker Shang Yang (*d*. 338 BC), who had developed a program of *gengzhan*, or 'agricultural war'. After Japan's victory in 1895, however, these efforts to boost commerce and industry in order to compete with foreigners seemed unlikely to succeed. Instead the focus shifted from trade to 'race'. Many reformers gradually came to adopt a vision of a world order dominated by the 'white race' against which the 'yellow race' had to fight in order to survive.

But the struggle for survival was nothing new. The nineteenth century was one of the most competitive periods in Chinese history. Demographic

pressure and an increasing shortage of resources had led to a decline in social mobility. Intense competition was the norm and shared lineage as well regional bonds were increasingly used to achieve social advancement.

The lineage (*zu*), or descent group, came into being in its modern form under the Song.[12] A type of social organisation generally confined to a village or a neighbourhood where it owned land, schools and an ancestral hall, it instilled a sense of solidarity among its members. Descent lines were recorded in genealogies (*zupu*), a task that might require the labour of many *zu* members. The last edition of the genealogy of the Zeng lineage in Hunan, which traced its descent from a prince of the Xia dynasty whose father had reigned in 2218–2168 BC, involved 106 participants. Attempts to establish a blood link with a mythical ancestor were based on the need for social prestige. Genealogies also proved that the lineage was pure and that there had been no intermarriage with any of the peoples that had invaded and ruled the empire.

Considerable friction could arise between *zu*, nurtured by feelings of rivalry, suspicion and envy. Open hostilities were often the consequence of strife and competition. Harry Lamley, who has analysed such lineage feuds, contends that they were widespread in late imperial China.[13] They prevailed throughout the empire, but were more common in the southeast, where the institution of the lineage had grown more powerful than in the north. Armed battles between lineages could involve many thousands of combatants while *zu* leaders even subsidised paramilitary operations. Terror and wanton destruction of crops and villages were the usual outcome of such feuds, called *xiedou*, 'armed battles'.

During the Qing 'armed battles to separate types' (*fenlei xiedou*) became common between Han and Muslims, Hakka (a minority group of southeast China) and Hoklo (Hokkien-speaking Chinese), and Hakka and Punti (native Cantonese). These lineage feuds strove to 'clear the boundaries' (*qingjie*) by ejecting those considered to be outsiders from their respective territories. Such clashes could be extremely violent: a major conflict between the Hakka and Punti in 1856–67 took a toll of 100,000 victims.

The reformers' understanding of racial war was based on lineage feuds. Their vision was sustained by the semantic similarity between *zu* as lineage and *zu* as race. *Yizu* meant 'exogenous lineage' or 'foreign race'. Reformers often combined *zu* with *zhong* as *zhongzu*, 'breed of lineage'. *Zhong* was the central element of a complex terminology; it meant 'seed', 'breed', or

'species', and was used in association with *lei*, 'type', 'category', in *zhonglei*, used to describe 'races'. *Zhong* could also be used in connection with a particular colour, like *huangzhong* or *heizhong*, 'yellow race' or 'black race'.

'Race' was a symbol of fictive biological cohesion capable of overarching regional allegiances and linking lineage loyalties in the face of foreign aggression. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, race would create nationhood. On the basis of strife between lineages, the reformers projected a vision of global conflict between races. Members of the yellow lineage had to fight against the members of the white lineage. The Yellow Emperor became the common ancestor of all Chinese. The ancestral territories, the divine soil of the Middle Kingdom traditionally associated with the colour yellow, in opposition to the 'red' and 'black' soils of the barbarians, needed to be defended against the white lineage.

Racial origins

Scholars in China tended to subscribe to polygenism, whereas most thinkers in Europe were absorbed by the Judeo-Christian thesis of monogenism. The Bible depicted Adam and Eve as the ancestors of all the peoples of the world: humanity descended from one (*mono*) kind (*genus*). In the nineteenth century, European scholars had to conceptually eliminate Adam in order to be able to reject the idea of a common origin for all of humanity.[14]

The monogenist thesis was introduced to China by missionaries like Adam Schall in the seventeenth century. The convert Li Zubai (*d*. 1665) published a history of the Christian church in 1663, in which he presented the Chinese as a branch of Judea that had migrated to the Middle Kingdom. It took Yang Guangxian (1597–1669), a prominent opponent of Christianity, only two years to publish a repudiation of Li's views:

> Schall's book says that one man and one woman were [created] as the first ancestors of mankind. He was not so bold as to state contemptuously that all the people of the world are the descendants of his religion. According to Li's book, however, our China is nothing but [an offshoot] of Judea; our ancient Chinese rulers, sages, and teachers were but the descendants of a heterodox sect; and our classics and sage teachings, propounded generation after generation, no more than the remnants of a heterodox religion. Are there no limits to foolishness?[15]

Within the context of race as culture, Yang Guangxian of course associated blood ties with a particular religion. At the end of the nineteenth century, however, the reformers opened up a new debate on human origins with their notion of race. Liang Qichao mentioned the existence of both monogenist (*yiyuan*) and polygenist (*duoyuan*) theses in the West, but he never developed the monogenist version, upon which most European racial theories rested. Liang also typified the Hamites and the Semites as two branches of the 'historical white race' (as opposed to the 'historical yellow race').[16] Such misapprehensions were common: the reformers were only just acquainting themselves with foreign systems of thought. But it also indicated an ambivalent tendency to believe in 'bigenism' ('two kinds', or the belief that humanity descends from two origins): the yellow race was of one origin, the white and black races were of the other.

Bigenism was developed in the *Xinmin congbao* by Jiang Zhiyou, a close collaborator of Liang Qichao. Jiang's inquiry into the origins of the Chinese race was dominated by the influence of Terrien de Lacouperie.[17] Jiang established a continuity between the Sumero-Akkadians, from whom the Yellow Emperor was descended, and the Finno-Tartar group, linguistically associated with the Mongolians, or the yellow race. The Semites, on the other hand, had overwhelmed the Sumero-Akkadians and engendered the Caucasians, or the white race. These speculations echoed Ernst Haeckel's theory, presented at the beginning of Jiang's study: Europeans and Africans descended from the African ape, whereas the Asians descended from the Asian apeman.[18]

The idea of bigenism was further elaborated in the early twentieth century. Hu Bingxiong, for instance, developed a theory on the different origins of East and West. The Eastern monkey was big and had no tail, whereas the Western monkey was small and more 'animal-like'.[19] At the level of popular culture, too, belief in bigenism may have been common. One missionary, for instance, reported at the end of the nineteenth century how some Chinese believed that foreigners were born entirely white or entirely black; like a litter of puppies, they all came from the same stock.[20]

Racial extinction

The emphasis on continuity led to fears of extinction. *Miezu*, the extinction of the lineage, became *miezhong*, the extinction of the race. Yan Fu was the

first to raise the threat of racial extinction: 'They will enslave us and hinder the development of our spirit and body… The brown and black races constantly waver between life and death, why not the 400 million yellows?'[21] For Yan Fu, the 'black race' and the 'brown race' performed a prophetic function: darker breeds were harbingers of racial decline and exemplified the fate that was in store for China if the empire did not catch up with the white lords of mankind. In America, the reformers argued, the ruthless laws of evolution had already trapped and killed off the 'red barbarians' (*hongyi*).[22] Liang Qichao pondered over the future of his country while touring the United States: was it not the destiny of the yellow race to follow the 'red' Indians, who would become museum pieces within thirty years?[23] During a visit to Hawaii, he reported that the original inhabitants constituted only one-fifteenth of the total population. The aborigines, naive creatures sunk in ignorance, 'were not even aware of their extinction'.[24] The 'blacks' in Africa and the 'browns' in the Pacific were all enslaved and would 'disappear from the face of the earth within several decades.'[25] Even cultural assimilation was unable to delete the stigma of race. African-Americans, driven by a crude urge for sex, had reproduced themselves at a faster rate than European descendants, or so Liang argued. But industrialisation had outpaced them, leaving them on the fringes of society. Death was looming in the twilight of time: Liang quoted statistics that showed how the number of African-Americans would fall by a third within a century.[26]

The spectre of racial extinction conveyed a sense of urgency to the message of reform. Repetition further sustained the power of words: race was hammered down the reader's throat. Appeals for the 'preservation of the race' (*baozhong*) were reiterated *ad nauseam* in the reformers' writings. It was even announced as a main goal in the Hunan periodical *Xiangxue xinbao*.[27] It is of course legitimate to question the extent to which the reformers genuinely believed in 'extinction'; they could be portrayed as a rival coterie of experts who merely constructed a Western threat in order to further their political interests. To ease access to power, the reformers tried to intimidate their opponents with images of racial doom and to persuade their audience of the benefits of their knowledge. Yan Fu, for instance, went to great lengths to counter potential sceptics *vis-à-vis* the idea of 'racial extinction'.[28] 'Western thought', moreover, could be no more than a

competing source of knowledge that derived its legitimacy independently from the traditional examination system. It is a common historical phenomenon that the choice of a particular ideology by a group is not based on a genuine interest in its theoretical elements, but stems rather from chance encounter. 'Western thought' could have been harnessed by political interests with minimal reference to its contents. The 'West' would then be no more than a prestige symbol manipulated by the reformers.

The 'white peril' could be an integral part of a rival definition of reality competing for power. Even in this case, reality for the reformers was to a large extent defined in terms of 'race'. The pervasiveness of racial discourse, moreover, indicates that the 'white peril' was not merely a political weapon: racial extinction was a genuine concern shared by many Chinese who felt threatened by the West towards the end of the nineteenth century. Fear of extinction was deeply rooted in the social institution of the lineage.

Racial classification

An important function of racial discourse was categorisation. Liang Qichao added the native Americans to Yan Fu's classification of four 'races'. Like most reformers, he divided humanity into five main categories: yellow, white, red, brown and black. In Europe, Johann Blumenbach (1752–1840), a German anatomist considered to be one of the founders of modern anthropology, had also advanced a fivefold classification: Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American and Malayan. Most European thinkers, however, propounded a white, yellow and black race when invoking skin colour. This tripartite scheme corresponded to Christian iconography, according to which the descendants of the three sons of Noah—Shem, Japheth and Ham—had populated the three continents. The three continents elaborated by medieval geography were also correlated to the three orders, transformed into three estates in France during the later Middle Ages. Many scholars, however, were more interested in the search for biological continuities than in classifications. Samuel Stanhope Smith, an early American anthropologist, dismissed classifications as a 'useless labour' because it was impossible to draw a clear line between the various peoples of the world.[29] Doubts over the divisibility of humans led to a multiplicity of classificatory schemes in the West.

The reformers tended to adhere to a division of humanity into five races. Tang Caichang (1867–1900), a well-known reformer who died in an abortive uprising in Hankou in 1900, juxtaposed five continents to five colours with almost poetic concision: 'Asia, Europe, America, Africa, Australia; yellow, white, red, black, brown' (*Ya Ou Mei Fei Ao ye; huang bai hong hei zong*).[30] Zhang Zhidong (1837–1909), a highly influential scholar and governor-general of Hunan and Hubei, also correlated five races to five continents.[31] Tang Caichang's detailed study, published between November 1897 and February 1898 in the *Xiangxue xinbao*, mentioned the *Gezhi huibian* (The Chinese scientific magazine). The *Gezhi huibian* was an illustrated periodical edited by John Fryer, a translator who cooperated with the missionaries. Here is how Tang presented racial classification in Europe: 'Westerners divide humanity into five races: the Mongolian race, the Caucasian race, the African race, the Malaysian race and the American Indian race. Their skin colour separates them into yellow, white, black, brown and red peoples.'[32] In fact, Fryer had described the Mongolian race as 'reddish brown' (*zhe*) and the American Indians as 'bronze' (*tong*).[33] Liang Qichao also discarded foreign systems of classification; he was aware of various schemes which ranged from one to sixty-three 'races', but nonetheless adhered to a fivefold division.[34]

The reformers adopted a traditional pattern based on the symbolic number five. Such wide-ranging elements as colours (*wucai*), sense organs (*wuguan*), flavours (*wuwei*), spices (*wuxiang*), metals (*wujin*) and natural elements (*wuxing*) were integrated into this numerical framework. The *Liji* mentioned sixty-two different groups of fivefold categories. Most aspects of the physical universe were manipulated to fit into a numerological set. The four seasons were meshed with the five phases.[35] During the period of Buddhist expansion in China, a system known as *geyi*, 'matching concepts', reconciled the Mahabhutas, or four elements, with the five Chinese elements.[36] Although this system was abandoned during the fifth century, it created an historical precedent that would shape subsequent attempts to incorporate foreign ideas into indigenous patterns.

There were five directions: China was 'the Middle', surrounded by the barbarians of the four compass points. A cosmographic view of the world in the *Tribute of Yu* represented the Imperial Centre (*difu*) surrounded by five concentric configurations progressively approaching the wastelands

(*huangfu*). Although it may not have directly influenced nineteenth-century intellectuals, the cosmological mapping which it expressed was an integral part of the Confucian symbolic universe. It would be wrong, however, to assume that the past influenced the reformers in a deterministic way. Tradition never affected the ideas of the reformers to the same extent as they determined what tradition should be. The past was manipulated in attempts to organise the present. The reformers subjectively made choices within their tradition; they located events of the past to create a cohesive unity with the present. Order and meaning were reconstructed by subtle alterations to collective memory.

Spatial representations were reformulated through the integration of fictive racial units with arbitrary geographical divisions: five races were correlated to five continents, just as in ancient China the barbarians of the four quarters (*siyi*) were associated with different symbolic colours.[37] This vision was supported by the character *zhou*, 'continent surrounded by water'. Its semantic content sanctioned the extension of the traditional world order beyond the four seas that customarily delineated the inhabited territories. China now assumed the central position in Asia, the 'Middle Continent'. Asia was surrounded by four continents, each belonging to a different tribe. The one to the west, symbolised by the colour white, was expanding. The red, brown and black lineages had already been vanquished.

Racial hierarchy

In the imaginary of the reformers, the white and yellow races were opposed to three darker breeds, doomed to racial extinction by hereditary inadequacy. Liang continuously divided his five races into 'noble' (*guizhong*) and 'ignoble' (*jianzhong*), 'superior' (*youzhong*) and 'inferior' (*liezhong*), 'historical' and 'ahistorical'. Tang Caichang opposed 'fine' (*liangzhong*) to 'mean' (*jianzhong*) races.[38] Such binary constructions were part of the categorical thinking prevalent in China since antiquity. Yin and Yang Confucianism supported a dualistic view of the cosmos. Male and female, for instance, were theoretically equivalent, but inequality was built into the gender division: *nan gui nü jian*, 'male is noble, female is mean'. Binary classifications were also extrapolated from the social hierarchy of the Qing. Subjects of the empire were divided into two categories: 'common', or 'fine people' (*liangmin*) and 'mean people' (*jianmin*). The

latter comprised several groups: government servants and attendants; tenant-servants; entertainers (*lehu*), including prostitutes and actors; beggars, 'fallen people' (*duomin*), 'boat people' (*jiuxing yuhu*) and the Dan (fishers on the south-east coast); slave-servants.[39] This line of demarcation was legally abolished by the emperor Yongzheng in 1723, but social discrimination against those classified as 'mean people' persisted until the twentieth century.[40]

The 'fallen people' of Shaoxing have been studied by James Cole. These hereditary outcasts were barred from taking part in examinations and registered separately from commoners until 1911. Intermarriage between *duomin* and *liangmin* was inconceivable. A native of Shaoxing wrote an essay on the 'fallen people' justifying their inferior social position: 'Among all men there are the respected and the base, the noble and the mean, the great and the little, the gentleman and the small man.'[41] His argument was supported by Han Yu's (768–824) theory of three grades in human nature and by quotations from the *Analects*. Attempts to classify human beings into categories, similar to the theories on humours developed in medieval Europe, were widespread.[42]

The reformers projected this hierarchical model upon the rest of the world. Few distinctions were established between the 'races' who lingered at the bottom of the hierarchy: they were all 'mean'. The writer Tang Caichang constructed antithetical couplets using the notion of four races introduced by Yan Fu: 'Yellow and white are wise, red and black are stupid; yellow and white are rulers, red and black are slaves; yellow and white are united, red and black are scattered.'[43] This example illustrates perfectly how categorical thinking was embedded in the very structure of the classical language, with evenly balanced clauses succeeding one another in a rhythmic progression.

While some of these racial categorisations were highly abstract, they were also suffused with vulgar stereotypes that could be found the world over. Australian aborigines, Tang opined, 'are pitch-black, have emaciated limbs, resemble a macaque and are more repulsive than the orangutan one can see in Malaysia'.[44] Other reformers were just as imbued with a sense of superiority. Liang Qichao persistently portrayed other peoples as unworthy: India did not flourish 'because of the limitations of her race'. He went further: 'All the black, red and brown races, by the microbes in their blood

vessels and their cerebral angle, are inferior to the whites. Only the yellows are not very dissimilar to the whites.'[45] Elsewhere he wrote that 'blacks and browns are lazy and stupid.'[46] Darker races were driven only by instinctive desires for food and sex. During his trip through the United States in 1903, Liang thus explained the American lynching phenomenon: 'The blacks' behaviour is despicable. They only die without regret if they have succeeded in touching a white woman's skin. They often lurk in the darkness of woods to rape them. Thereafter these women are murdered so that they will not talk. Nine out of ten cases of lynching are due to this crime.'[47] Racial prejudice was often extrapolated from regional stereotypes, which have always been rife in China. Liang Qichao, as Young Lung-chang has demonstrated, contributed several articles on regional differences within China, equally based on sweeping generalisations and absurd prejudices.[48]

Racial frontiers

In the imaginary of the reformers, China was being pulled apart by the conflicting forces of decline and renewal. It would either merge with the defeated hordes of degenerate breeds or join the ranks of the dominating races. A still loftier ideal beckoned: China could subjugate the white race and rule the world. Liang Qichao declared that the whites were arrogant and disliked hard work.[49] The yellows, on the contrary, were humble and diligent; they were the initiators of civilisation, the descendants of the Yellow Emperor.[50] The darker races had already been eliminated from the stage of history. China could conquer the globe, and Australia and America would become the colonies of the ruling yellow race.[51] Liang took European fears of the 'yellow peril' as a promise of future strength: 'Our Chinese race is the most expansive and vigorous race on the earth. Both England and France are alarmed because our race cannot be restrained and will spread all over the world. They even fear that we will one day overflow and invade Europe.'[52] Articles on the 'yellow peril', taken from the foreign press, were translated and published in the reformers' main journal.[53]

The 'white race', however, remained a rather ill-defined category. Throughout his voluminous writings, Liang Qichao endeavoured to categorise it further. In the first issue of his 'New Citizen', for instance, he divided Europe into Latin, Slavonic and Teutonic 'races'. The Latins had

reached their peak during the Middle Ages, but had perished under the Teutons, who had dominated Europe since the fall of Rome. The Teutons were further subdivided into Germans and Anglo-Saxons. The Anglo-Saxons had proved to be the only 'superior race': they occupied a quarter of the globe and were present on all the five continents.[54]

Classifications and charts figured prominently in Liang's work, lending an aura of scientific authenticity to his racial message. A more sophisticated analysis led him to distinguish between a Hamitic, a Semitic and an Aryan race. The Hamitic and Semitic races, assumed to be branches of the white race, had had their period of glory in ancient Europe, but only the Aryan race—comprising the Latin, Celtic, Teutonic and Slavonic branches—had contributed to modern European civilisation. Through an inexorable process of struggle for survival, Liang claimed, the Teutons had emerged in recent times as the dominant power.[55]

The primary function of these articles was to channel information about other peoples to Chinese readers, many of whom were discovering that the West encompassed many different life-styles, with values and norms widely at variance from those of their own country. But all these efforts to dissect the 'white race' also served to belittle the empire's sole rival for supremacy. The notion of a 'white race' was narrowed down to the Anglo-Saxons; all other Westerners somehow receded into the background.

Racial frontiers could also be reassigned when it came to the 'yellow race'. The Vietnamese were usually classified as 'brown', but during their struggle against the French they suddenly found themselves described as 'real yellows' who would 'never allow themselves to become meat on the white race's chopping block'. They would fight the French devils (*fagui*) until not one single 'hirsute, ash-eyed white man' remained in their country —or so Liang proclaimed.[56] The Filipinos, normally described as 'brown', were greeted as the 'spearhead of the yellow race's fight against the white race' during their struggle against the United States in 1898.[57] Japan's success in emulating the West was ascribed to the fact that its race had 'originated from China'.[58]

The discourse of race found institutional support after Liang's arrival in Japan in late 1898. After the *coup d'état* which abruptly ended the Hundred Days, the three months during which the emperor appointed reformers to official positions in an attempt to modernise the country, he escaped with

the help of pan-Asianists Hirayama Shū and Yamada Ryōsei.[59] Some of Liang's closest friends in Japan were linked to pan-Asianist associations, for instance Miyasaki Torazō and Kashiwabara Bantarō. Pan-Asianism was based on the notion of a 'common race' (*dōshu* or *tongzhong*) and a shared cultural heritage (*dōbun* or *tongwen*), uniting Asia in its fight for independence from the West. Liang introduced pan-Asianism in the first issue of his *Qingyibao* (Upright discussions), which he started two months after his arrival in Japan. The aims of this journal included the 'exchange of information between China and Japan and the establishment of friendship'. He also proposed to 'expound the learning of East Asia in order to preserve Asia's essence (*yacui*).'[60] Japan was acclaimed as China's 'fraternal neighbour, as closely related as lips to teeth', an old saying which became proverbial after it was used by the last Jin emperor in a warning to the Song emperor against the Mongols.[61] Pan-Asianism was compatible with Liang's longing for a new global world order, a notion typical of intellectuals emerging from a Confucian ideal of universal harmony. It did not, however, exert a lasting influence on him, as he soon realised that this utopian vision was subordinated to Japan's military ambitions overseas. After little more than a year, on the occasion of the hundredth issue of the *Qingyibao*, the principles of pan-Asianism were quietly dropped.[62] A subsequent analysis of Asia's racial composition would only confer the title of 'superior yellow race' on China; other Asians were categorised as members of an 'inferior yellow race'.[63]

Liang also rejected the Western notion of a 'Mongolian race' and excluded China's minorities from the 'genuine yellows'. He distinguished ten different 'races' in China, six of which he judged to be relatively important. The Miao were described as China's aborigines, similar to America's 'reds' or Australia's 'blacks'. The comparison was symbolic: the Miao were doomed to rapid extinction and deserved no further attention. In contrast to his dismissal of the Miao, there followed a passionate panegyric to the Han 'race'. They were the initiators of a civilisation whose benign influence extended to the whole of Asia. They were the ones who could claim divine origin and were illustrious all over the world. The Tibetan 'race', found in Tibet and Burma, were the descendants of the Jiang (during the Yin and Zhou dynasties), the Yue (during the Qin and Han dynasties), the Tufan (during the Tang dynasty) and the Xixia (during the Song

dynasty). The Mongols, living in inner and outer Mongolia, were renowned for their military prowess and had founded the Yuan dynasty. The Xiongnu lived in Middle Asia and in the Xinjiang area; they also included several ancient barbarian tribes. The Tungus—the founders of the Qing dynasty—had originated in north Korea and spread over the Heilongjiang region. Although Liang found it difficult to determine the precise origins of a race, he concluded that the 'gigantic Han race' was quite unique and by no means comparable to China's minorities.[64] He declared that the terms 'Han race' and 'yellow race' were synonymous.[65] The racial frontiers of the 'genuine yellows' did not extend beyond the Han.

Racial assimilation

Intermarriage between select races was seen as a key to reform. In 1898 Yi Nai actively advocated racial fusion (*hezhong*) as a means of strengthening the Qing. Although he anticipated intermarriage with the white race, unions with the inferior 'black' and 'red' races were to be abjured.[66] The diplomat Wu Tingfang also pronounced himself in favour of mixed unions: 'There is no doubt that mixed marriages between the white and the yellow races will be productive of good on both sides.'[67] Tang Caichang advocated blending the white and yellow races,[68] for it was only through 'racial communication' (*tongzhong*) that China would flourish again. He advanced ten arguments in support of intermarriage:

(1) The exuberance of flowers and plants was the result of their original union. Giant prehistoric trees that had failed to merge with other varieties had disappeared after natural catastrophes.
(2) Bees and butterflies were the matchmakers of nature. They contributed to the blooming of flowers by transmitting pollen from one variety to the other.
(3) Zoologists had proved that the nature of animals could be enhanced by environmental and dietary change. In the Age of Great Peace, the world would be open to exchange, the mean would be ennobled, and the unruly would become tractable. In times of trouble, people lived in insularity, devoured by envy and hatred for different people, debased by an evil nature.

(4) In ancient times, marriage within the lineage had been prohibited. This principle was in accordance with the idea of racial exchange. Only people isolated by high mountains and deep valleys could not flourish and quickly disappeared.
(5) Between the five continents, there was a general flow of political, artistic, military and economic exchanges. Why would racial exchange not follow?
(6) The Japanese recognised the strength of the European race and the weakness of the Asian race: their government sanctioned the practice of intermarriage.
(7) In Hong Kong, Singapore and the Pacific islands, intermarriage between Chinese and foreigners had produced offspring of unparalleled intelligence and strength.
(8) Although England, Russia, France and Germany all maintained national borders and nurtured mutual distrust, their citizens were free to intermarry.
(9) Buddhism believed in a pervading spirit uniting all living creatures.
(10) Intermarriage was not confined to the treaty ports alone: even several high officials had taken Western wives.

Tang drew upon botany, zoology, history and even Buddhism in his defence of race contact. Thus far, however, his arguments lacked an essential element: an indigenous cultural trait on which the idea of racial exchange could be grafted. Tang continued his dissertation by opposing two foreign bodies of learning. On the one hand, proponents of evolution believed in the theory of natural selection and the elimination of the unfit. Exponents of physiology, on the other, considered that with the progress of medicine and science, the weak could be cured and the evil transformed. Evolution corresponded to Xunzi's theory of man's evil nature. Physiology was compared to Mencius' teachings on the innate goodness of man. Whereas Xunzi upheld justice (*yi*), Mencius supported humanity (*ren*). Only the latter, however, suited the 'One World' (*datong*), an age of equality in which racial communication would inevitably follow other forms of communication. Mencius sanctioned racial amalgamation: only if the white and yellow races merged would the strength of the yellow race be enhanced, in accordance with Confucianism.

Kang Youwei, perhaps the most acclaimed Chinese philosopher of the last hundred years, expounded a utopian vision of the world in his *Datongshu*, or 'One World', completed in 1902. Kang was an outstanding classical scholar from an influential gentry family near Canton. Although many members of his lineage were traditional scholars, some rose to official positions through military service; others engaged in trade, and one of his uncles applied his talents to industrial enterprise. Kang Youwei became the leader of the reform movement and played a key role during the Hundred Days in 1898.

In his *Datongshu*, Kang projected an idealised view of the world in which distinctions based on race, class, nation, wealth and gender would disappear. He called for an end to property and the family in the interests of a cosmopolitan, equalitarian future. He also argued for the elimination of racial differences in order to achieve universal harmony. He proposed to transform what he viewed as darker and hence inferior races through dietary change, intermarriage, migration and sterilisation.

Dietary change consisted of replacing 'indigestible insects, grass' and other raw ingredients, on which Africans were thought to subsist, by properly cooked food. If several generations of Africans were given a Chinese diet, they would lose their fishy smell (*xingchou*).[69] Intermarriage was more difficult to realise. The appearance of Africans, 'with their iron faces, silver teeth, slanting jaws like a pig, front view like an ox, full breasts and unkempt hair, their hands and feet dark black, stupid (*chun*) like sheep or swine', was simply too frightening.[70] No refined white woman would ever agree to mate with a 'monstrously ugly black'.[71] Whites and yellows who married Africans as a contribution to the purification of mankind should therefore be awarded a medal with the inscription 'Improver of the Race'.[72]

The migration method was founded on environmental determinism. Kang had already observed that British people born in India had a 'yellow-bluish' (*huanglan*) hue, whereas Chinese born in Europe or in the United States evidenced a distinctive white complexion. Elderly Africans should be shipped to Canada, South America and Brazil, the best of the Africans being relocated in Europe.[73]

The last method recommended by Kang was sterilisation. 'Browns or blacks whose characteristics are too bad, whose physical appearance is too

ugly or who carry a disease should be given a sterilising medication to stop the perpetuation of their race.'[74]

Some racial theorists in Europe proposed segregation or even extermination, whereas Kang prescribed global unity through racial assimilation. He transformed the imperial concept of cultural absorption into a vision of physical amalgamation. Europe's technological advances had paved the way to the discovery of the world, but Westerners soon realised that they were demographically in the minority. In the tortured imagination of some racist thinkers, the West was confronted with hordes of uncivilised savages who would overflow and destroy their superior civilisation. China had less to fear. The reformers pointed to its huge land mass and vast population. They could safely surmise that yellow would emerge as the dominant type after an amalgamation of the races, much as Mao Zedong, half a century later, would contemplate atomic war, firmly believing that China would prevail by sheer weight of numbers.

Geographic determinism was important not only for Kang Youwei's migration plans. Xue Fucheng (1838–94), a high official and respected expert on foreign affairs often quoted by the reformers, stopped in Southeast Asia on his way to Europe, where he served as ambassador in several countries from 1890 until his death four years later. His diary was an eye-witness report: 'I have seen the aborigines of Saigon, Singapore and Ceylon. They are ugly and savage, similar to deer and swine. The various people from Vietnam, Burma, India, Malaya and Arabia are all black-faced, stocky and boorish. How could they be compared with the Chinese refinement and elegance and the Europeans' whiteness and tall stature?'[75] Climate, Xue surmised, was responsible for this racial inequality. Below the 'red line', or equator, the heat drained them of their *jingqi*,[76] or vital essence. 'In the tropics, people propagate but have no spirit.'[77] Only in the temperate zones could *jingqi* be congealed and accumulated, setting the 'whites' and 'yellows' apart from the other races. Geographic determinism also helped Liang Qichao to explain the irreversible inferiority of the darker races. Africans lived in tropical regions: they had a 'muddled mind' and 'did not think of progress'.[78]

In any event, despite all the talk about intermarriage, attitudes remained ambivalent, in particular among the elite. As late as 1910 students abroad were expressly commanded not to approach foreign women. Marriage with

an alien female, it was claimed, would only lead to the abandonment of the course of study, to a waste of money, and to national subjugation.[79] Official disgrace and public opprobrium continued to meet those who were seen to betray their country by marrying a foreigner. Lu Zhengxiang (1871–1949), a future Minister of Foreign Affairs, married a Belgian girl in 1899 despite the formal disapproval of his superiors. His wife was forbidden from attending any official function for almost a decade.[80] Foreign husbands, observed Jerome Ch'en, provoked an 'acid feeling' among some men, who sneered at women married to foreigners and would even write threatening letters urging them to stay 'pure'.[81]

'Western influence'

As was underlined in the introduction to this chapter, the reformers interacted mainly with indigenous intellectual trends and had only occasional contact with foreign systems of thought. Liang Qichao's main source of inspiration was the *Yinghuan zhilüe* (Brief account of the maritime circuit), which he bought in Shanghai in 1894 after having failed the metropolitan examination. Only then did he 'start to discover that there were five continents and various nations'.[82] The *Yinghuan zhilüe*, introduced in the preceding chapter, was a world geography compiled from various sources by the New Text Confucianist Xu Jiyu in 1848. It presented Africa as a chaotic continent, inhabited by backward barbarians.

Tang Caichang also drew upon the *Yinghuan zhilüe* in his description of Africa.[83] He introduced his 'Study of the Races of the World' with a summary of Yan Fu's essays.[84] Tang's study was a compilation of quotations taken from Chinese and Western sources. Altogether, he cited thirty-three different sources, of which eighteen were Chinese.[85] Besides Xu Jiyu, the most often quoted was the *Wanguo shiji* ('A World History') by the Japanese Okamoto Kansuke, translated in the 1890s. Of the fifteen Western publications cited, all translated by missionaries, eleven dealt exclusively with European history. Finally, of a total of ninety-seven quotations, only twenty-seven were derived from Western sources.

Robert Mackenzie's *The Nineteenth Century: A History* was often invoked by the reformers. Translated by Timothy Richard in 1894, it became popular among the new elites and was included in a selection of

foreign books that Liang Qichao strongly recommended to students of the West.[86] Mackenzie's history was a hymn to the benefits of progress. *The Nineteenth Century* depicted a state of barbarism and ignorance that was vanquished by a reign of enlightenment and democracy. Within this universe, missionaries spent years of excruciating effort attempting to undermine heathenism and reclaim the world to God. A typical example was the Sandwich Islands in the South Pacific Ocean. Before the arrival of Christianity and civilisation, the inhabitants had 'sunk to the lowest depth of degradation. They fed on raw fish and the flesh of dogs… The family relation was unknown. Licentiousness was without limit or restraint of shame… Population was rapidly diminishing under the wasting influence of the vices which prevailed.'[87] With Christianity, however, the picture changed drastically. 'The people became quiet, orderly, industrious… [Christianity was] bringing in its train security to life and property, peace, industry, and progress; raising the wasteful and treacherous savage to the dignity of a God-fearing, law-abiding citizen, who bears fairly his contribution to the common welfare of the human family.'[88] The reformers blotted out the whole process of progress which had elevated the 'savage' to 'civilisation', denying that the 'black race' could possibly be part of the 'human family'. Notions such as 'equality among nations', 'human family' or 'coexistence of civilisations' were discarded. There had been one world, and the world would be one.

Another example is William A. P. Martin's translation of Henry Wheaton's standard work, *Elements of International Law*, first published in 1863. This treatise was used by Tang Caichang and other reformers in support of their views about the empire's minorities, who were considered to have no culture or religion and thus could not be regarded as equal to the 'civilised races'. By quoting Wheaton, these opinions were given a pseudo-legal sanction. Yet the reformers considerably distorted the *Elements* by citing the only sentence concerning 'savages' in a 500-page treatise: 'A state is also distinguished from an unsettled horde of wandering savages not yet formed into a civil society.'[89] Kang Youwei had gained fame by drawing on his scholarship to reinterpret the classics: he attempted to demonstrate that Confucius had never resisted social change and that Confucianism was compatible with reform. Equally, the reformers

manipulated foreign sources in their efforts to reconstruct an alternative symbolic universe.

Extensive exposure to racial discrimination in Europe or the United States seemed to confirm, rather than undermine, belief in racial categories. In a chapter entitled 'California, 1882–1885: Confrontation with Racial Antagonism', the historian Noriko Kamachi has convincingly demonstrated how the reformer Huang Zunxian (1848–1905) developed an evolutionary worldview of racial conflict after having experienced racial discrimination in the United States. Huang was shocked by the violence of anti-Chinese sentiment and felt humiliated by the lowly position of the Chinese in California. He would later express his pride in his country in an aggressive military march with the words: 'Harmony among the five continents cannot be realised. Blacks and reds were humiliated by the whites. Now the whites are afraid of the "yellow peril". What is the yellow peril? It is we, we Asians! We! We! We!'[90] Belief in universal harmony was all too easily inverted into a vision of racial conflagration.

Huang, however, had developed racial theories even before his arrival in the United States. In Japan, he used the phrase 'same culture same race' (*tongwen tongzhong*) to construct a fictive sense of blood kinship between China and his host country. Huang insisted that the Japanese were descendants of the Han, and reproached them for neglecting to mention their Chinese ancestry.[91] Moreover, before his arrival in the United States, Huang was already writing about the 'black slaves' and the 'yellow race' being endangered by the mounting white tide.[92] His ideas seemed to be in harmony with those of Okamoto Kansuke, the author of a world history that was popular with the reformers in the 1890s: 'There are five human races: the yellow, the white, the black, the purple and the copper. Their origins are all different.'[93] In any event, did racial discrimination oblige Huang to denigrate what he called the 'stupid black slaves', or had the 'black race' never been part of his ideal of universal harmony (*datong*)?[94] At the age of twenty, still immersed in a sinocentric universe, a young Huang Zunxian wrote that 'all men are fashioned out of yellow mud'. At fifty-four, having discovered the world, he wondered 'Why is the yellow race not the only race in the world?'[95]

Alternatives

The traditional elite tried to maintain its power by discrediting the reformers' competing body of knowledge. For scholar-officials working in the Qing government, 'race' was a taboo concept, as it implied a degree of relativism that undermined the very base of their sinocentric universe.[96] In mid-1898 a group of conservatives drew up a seven-point 'Scholars' Covenant' criticising the reformers. The sixth point lambasted the vitiated language of Kang Youwei's followers and denounced the use of terms like 'yellow race' (*huangzhong*) and 'white race' (*baizhong*).[97] Ye Dehui also vehemently rebuked the reformers' proposals for racial amalgamation, which he could only describe as the 'wild barking of mad dogs'.[98] The notion of race remained the prerogative of the reformers.

The reformers viewed race as the extension of a common patrilineal line of descent. *Baozhong*, or the 'preservation of the race', encapsulated contemporary anxieties and legitimised the need for reform. Confucianism, however, continued to exert an influence as a moral faith. *Baojiao*, or the 'preservation of the faith', was an attempt to promote Confucianism as a national religion by giving it institutional legitimation. Despite the many attacks on the traditional worldview, Confucianism remained a powerful form of identity. *Baohuang*, or the 'preservation of the emperor', was also upheld by the reformers in their promotion of a constitutional monarchy. Most people, however, wanted neither Confucius nor Emperor. The revolutionaries would reject both in order to focus on the preservation of the race.

4

RACE AS NATION (1903–1915)

The racial categories developed by the reformers after 1895 divided humanity into four or five distinct ‘races’. The core of the ‘yellow race’ was to be found in the Middle Kingdom. But in the wake of the abortive Hundred Days Reform of 1898, which ended when the Empress Dowager rescinded all the reform decrees and executed several officials, a number of radical intellectuals began advocating the overthrow of the Manchus, who ruled the Qing dynasty. Not entirely dissimilar to the 1789 and 1848 political revolutions in Europe, the anti-Manchu revolutionaries represented the ruling elite as an inferior ‘race’ responsible for the disastrous policies which had led to the decline of the country. They contrasted the Manchus to the Han, or majority Chinese. In search of national unity, the revolutionaries viewed the Han not only as a culturally distinct people with their own language and shared history, but also as a pure ‘race’. This notion of a Han ‘race’ took shape in a political context of opposition both to foreign powers and to the ruling Manchus. To describe the Han, the revolutionaries used the term of *minzu*, combining the idea of a people (*min*) with the fiction of patrilineal descent (*zu*). The term first appeared in 1903 in an attempt to find a political rationale for a modern nation-state.[1] ‘Minzu’, often translated as ‘nation’, designated a lineage that shared a territory and an ancestor: it was both a racial and a corporate unit and is more accurately translated as *Volk*.

This chapter draws on the periodical press and political pamphlets circulated by the revolutionaries. The reformers transformed the press from a vehicle for trade news into a powerful social and literary force; the revolutionaries expanded the scope of the periodical press even further to turn it into a means of propaganda. They were generally better funded and better organised than the reformers, some making use of extraterritorial arrangements for the pursuit of their journalistic activities. Moreover,

whereas the older generation still wrote in a literary style that mainly addressed the educated public, the younger revolutionaries did so in various degrees of vernacular, aiming at the largest possible readership. Finally, it should be noted that despite official censorship and the imperial ban on revolutionary journals, the printed word continued to command a wide circulation in China as well as in Chinese communities abroad. Revolutionary ideas were disseminated within China mainly by two new social groups: the students who had returned from Japan, whose numbers dramatically increased from the turn of the century onwards, and the new officers in the reformed army, who often maintained close links with the revolutionaries. But before we turn to the revolutionaries, we need to understand how evolution was understood in China at the time.

Racial evolution

The racial categories that developed in China after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 were founded on new evolutionary ideas from Europe, yet all too often those ideas have been cursorily described as 'social Darwinism'. Social Darwinism, strictly speaking, should be defined as the application of Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection to the evolution of human society. The term has been used uncritically to characterise a whole variety of evolutionary ideas that diverge significantly from Darwin's original theory. The historian Peter Bowler has warned that 'little will be gained if the term "social Darwinism" is extended to cover so many different ideas that it becomes virtually meaningless.'[2]

It is difficult to describe Darwin's theory of evolution precisely, especially in view of the many modifications he introduced in subsequent editions of his *On the Origin of Species* (first published in 1859). Several aspects of his work, however, should be highlighted in order to compare it to that of different evolutionary thinkers.

First, Darwin never developed a systematic analogy between the natural world and human society. He insisted repeatedly that he was not competent to discuss the social application of his theory. He did, however, contribute to the rise of what would later be called social Darwinism by using highly metaphorical concepts in the theoretical exposition of natural selection. The adoption of metaphorical concepts, derived from Malthus and Spencer, reinforced the tendency to theorise in social rather than biological terms.[3]

The expression ‘survival of the fittest’ originated only in the 1860s as a synonym for natural selection, not in the early 1850s, before the publication of *On the Origin of Species*, as is sometimes assumed.[4]

Secondly, Darwin insisted on the individual basis of human evolution. He emphasised selection between individuals, as opposed to selection between groups. ‘Owing to this struggle for life, any variation, however slight and from whatever cause proceeding, if it be in any degree profitable to an individual of any species, in its infinitely complex relations to other organic beings and to external nature, will tend to the preservation of that individual, and will generally be inherited by its offspring.’[5] The struggle for existence arose between individuals of the same species, with individuals of other species, or with the environment, but Darwin admitted that ‘the struggle almost invariably will be most severe between the individuals of the same species.’[6] In *The Descent of Man* (1871), Darwin maintained his individualistic approach to evolution but also pointed to intergroup competition. Competition between groups, however, was combined with cooperation within groups.

Thirdly, Darwin emphasised that development was a branching and adaptive process, as opposed to the neo-Lamarckian theory of linear ascent. Darwinism saw evolution as an open-ended process governed by natural selection, adaptation and random change. Growth and development represented a process of specialisation, leading to new branches on the evolutionary tree. Neo-Lamarckism viewed evolution as an inevitable ascent through a preordained hierarchy of developmental stages on a ladder. Design and progress guided the Lamarckian paradigm: from invertebrates to fish, reptiles, mammals and humans, the embryo developed in a purposeful way towards maturity.

Finally, Darwin did not believe that social progress could be transmitted through inheritance. The theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics was also part of the Lamarckian paradigm. Darwin emphasised random variation and selection. Lamarck assumed that phenotypical changes imposed by altered habits could be inherited by the next generation: the giraffe, for instance, stretches its neck to reach higher leaves. Structural modifications had gradually been accumulated over many generations, producing the long neck which characterises the species.

As soon as it appeared, Darwin’s theory of natural selection was raided by authors of the most divergent political convictions. Many searched to

enshrine their preconceived opinions in an evolutionary framework. In France, for instance, right-wing politicians appropriated Darwinian slogans to equate economic competition with the struggle for survival. The dominant tendency, however, was to downplay the 'struggle for life' and to emphasise the progressive implications of evolution, such as social solidarity and cooperation.[7]

In the Arab world, some Christian intellectuals adopted popular slogans of struggle for survival.[8] Generally, however, the theory of evolution was interpreted in terms of Quranic authority: most intellectuals rejected the evolutionist justification of war. A medical scholar born to a Christian family, Shibli Shumayyil translated Buchner's commentary on Darwin into Arabic, replacing struggle and competition by cooperation and striving for the happiness of the whole.[9] The Egyptian scholar Ismail Mazhar supported Kropotkin's views of mutual aid, while Jurji Zaydan, a prolific Lebanese novelist, appealed to Henri Drummond's idea of cooperation.[10]

The predominant evolutionary theories in China from the end of the nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century were non-Darwinian. Complete translations of Charles Darwin's work were not even available until 1919.[11] Chinese intellectuals interpreted the theory of evolution in a socio-political context very different from that of the West. They operated within a symbolic universe that led them to reinforce different aspects of the evolutionary paradigm. As Mary Rankin noted, 'although the idea of struggle for survival could be used in almost any context, the 1911 revolutionaries tended to apply it particularly in racial terms.'[12] The predominant interpretation of the theory of natural selection was one of racial competition (*zhongzu jingzheng*) and racial survival (*baozhong*). The main source of inspiration was the synthetic philosophy of Spencer and the linear model of Lamarck.

Yan Fu brought Herbert Spencer's work to the attention of his readers in a series of short essays written in 1895. A few years later, in 1898, Zhang Binglin (1869–1936), together with Zeng Guangquan, the grandson of Zeng Guofan, published an introduction to the English philosopher in the reformist journal *Changyanhao*.[13] The first sociology textbook published in Chinese was Zhang Binglin's translation of a Japanese work inspired by Spencer.[14] It appeared in 1902, the same year in which Yan Fu finished his influential translation of Spencer's *The Study of Sociology* (1872).[15] The

following year, Ma Junwu's *A Guide to Sociology* included a chapter of Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*;[16] Franklin H. Giddings' compendium on Spencer was also made available in Chinese.[17]

An important feature of Spencer's philosophy was his belief in the unity of evolution. All processes of change were explained as the manifestations of a global cosmic evolution. Spencer's faith in the necessity of a universal principle appealed to Chinese intellectuals, who were emerging from a symbolic universe that stressed the interrelation of human and cosmic processes. The reformers attempted to insert their ideas about political change into a wider global framework of evolutionary cosmology. Analogous thinking correlated natural, spiritual and social phenomena as the manifestations of a single cosmic principle.

Spencer also focussed on group selection. His holistic approach to the idea of evolution stands in contrast to the individualistic basis of Darwin's theory. In Spencer's view, the individual was embedded in a social aggregate that evolved organically. The object of sociology was to study these aggregates: 'In every case its object is to interpret the growth, development, structure, and functions, of the social aggregate, as brought about by the mutual actions of individuals whose natures are partly like those of all men, partly like those of kindred races, partly distinctive.'[18] Societies were aggregates of men, groups whose properties were determined by the properties of their parts. Correlative to this holistic approach was Spencer's comparison of society to an organism. This analogy stood in opposition to the other main social theory of the nineteenth century, namely the mechanistic analogy, which viewed human intervention as independent from the social structure. Whereas the organismic view implied a collectivistic political theory, the mechanistic approach supported individualism and atomism.[19] Contemporaries like Lester Ward were quick to point out the incompatibility of Spencer's organismic view of society with his almost fanatical belief in *laissez-faire*. As the sociologist Stanislaw Andreski noted, 'Rather than to fundamentalist liberalism, Spencer's theory of society should have led him to espouse some form of authoritarian collectivism because the organisms regarded as higher display a greater centralization of the nervous system, and a greater subordination of the parts to the whole.'[20]

Scholars in China were not only attracted to Spencer's notion of group. They were also inspired by the Ming loyalists, whose writings were revived by both reformers and revolutionaries. Wang Fuzhi's concept of *qun* (group), used in association with *zu* (lineage) or *lei* (type), was particularly influential. Liang Qichao published a study on *qun* (also meaning 'crowd', 'pack' or 'flock') in 1897. His 'Shuoqun' (About groups) centred around the problem of the integration and organisation of the political community.[21] For Liang, processes of change and evolution were directed by the cosmological principle of grouping. Huang Zunxian also perceived China's lack of national cohesion as the country's greatest weakness. He noted that in the West, individuals united in groups to cooperate. The ancient philosopher Xunzi's idea of *qun* supported his views: 'Heaven created men without the ability to fly like birds or run as fast as beasts. Nonetheless, men are superior in the world. The reason is that men can pool their strength, which beasts cannot do. In the world nothing is stronger than the power of unified force. It is like burning coal: if the pieces are scattered, even a child can kick and extinguish them; if they are put together in a stove, the heat is so intense that no one can even approach it.'[22]

Huang developed his ideas about national cohesion around the concept of *qun* by 1897. Yan Fu linked *qun* specifically to Spencer's idea of group by translating sociology as *qunxue*, 'the study of groups', 'for', as he explained, 'Xunzi said that man is superior to animals by his ability to group.'[23] Yan Fu also briefly introduced Darwin to his readers, but focused exclusively on the theory of struggle for survival. Instead of taking on board Darwin's emphasis on the individual, Yan pictured evolution as a constant struggle between groups defined as 'races':

> By struggle of species, it is meant struggle for survival. By natural selection, it is meant the survival of the fittest race [zhong]. The idea is that people and living organisms appeared in the world and coexisted in all their variety, feeding together on the benefits of nature. When they came in contact with each other, they struggled for their own survival. In the beginning, races struggled with races [zhongzheng], then groups struggled with groups. The weak constantly became the prey of the strong, the stupid constantly became the slaves of the intelligent. Those who survived and perpetuated their species had to be resistant and valiant, agile and ingenious.[24]

Yan Fu shifted the emphasis from individual competition to racial struggle. Group cohesion, he argued, was the principle by which 'the race is strong and the group can stand.'[25]

Zhang Binglin also associated the principle of *qun* with racial strength. In his article 'On bacteria' (1899), he explained that racial power was proportional to the ability to group (*hequn*): the inferior black, brown and red races, he believed, had become prostrate before the yellow race because they had failed to group. On the other hand, the yellow race was dominated by the whites. The whites had vanquished the yellows because of their greater ability to group.[26]

Spencer's cosmological vision of evolution and his concept of group survival attracted Chinese intellectuals. Struggle between groups, however, was not a salient characteristic of his philosophy. Spencer deprecated struggle, abhorred the growth of militarism and disliked biological justifications for war. In his view, cooperation gained a clear preponderance over struggle in the industrial stage of society. Spencer was influenced by Lamarck long before the publication of Darwin's work, and believed firmly in the theory of inheritance of acquired characteristics. From a Lamarckian point of view, the development of altruism was central to the process of adaptation to the environment. Natural selection and struggle for survival were no more than a passing phase of evolution, gradually replaced by cooperation.[27]

In 1898 Yan Fu also translated T. H. Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*. In his lecture of 1893 on evolution and ethics, Huxley had vigorously attacked *laissez-faire* policies and had defended the need to curtail self-interest. Social cooperation was seen as superior to social competition: 'I have termed this gradual strengthening of the social bond, which, though it arrests the struggle for existence inside society, up to a certain point improves the chances of society, as a corporate whole, in the cosmic struggle—the ethical process.'[28] For Huxley, competition was paramount only in the primitive 'state of nature'. Human intervention had led to the construction of a 'state of art', protecting humanity from the antagonism of the cosmic process.[29] Yan Fu paraphrased Huxley: 'The reason why those who want to form a group suppress competition within that group is so that they can withstand the natural forces without the group.'[30] Even among the lower orders, Huxley detected the fundamental principle of group cohesion which exerted such a strong appeal on his Chinese interpreters: 'Within it [the beehive], the struggle for existence is strictly limited. Queen, drones and workers have each their allotted sufficiency of food; each performs the

function assigned to it in the economy of the hive, and all contribute to the success of the whole cooperative society in its competition with rival collectors of nectar and pollen and with other enemies, in the state of nature without.'[31] The Huxleian dichotomy between 'artificial' and 'natural' society was convergent with the *nei-wai* opposition, or inner-outer dualism, so characteristic of Chinese social philosophy. The writings of Yan Fu and other leading reformers represented an internal state of art opposed to an external state of nature. Spencer's idea of inter-group competition was combined with Huxley's concept of intra-group cooperation to form a social policy of group cohesion that adequately fitted the needs of the time.

In the comments Yan Fu intermingled with his translation of Huxley, the concern with the racial categorisation was evident.[32] The terms 'group' and 'race' were interchanged, the simian origin of humans was expounded at length and the imminent racial extinction of the red and black races was announced.[33] Yan Fu even perceived the power to colonise and open up new territories as indicative of the 'inferiority or superiority of a people's race'.[34]

The influence of these comments was considerable. One radical writer, for instance, used them to legitimise his own theory on the subhuman origins of the Manchus. The author, writing in the radical magazine *Jiangsu*, compared the difference that had existed between the first humans and the primates to the chasm separating civilised people from 'inferior races of nomads', and went on to urge the Chinese to distance themselves from these 'inferior races' and to join the 'civilised nations' in their advance towards the Pure Land (*jile shijie*, a translation of the Buddhist Sukhavati).[35]

The evolutionary theories that appeared during the last decades of the Qing were essentially non-Darwinian.[36] The individual basis of evolution was replaced with the concept of *qun*. Darwin's emphasis on the branching process of evolution was also discarded. Reformers and revolutionaries adopted a theory of linear evolution which closely resonated with the Lamarckian paradigm. This implied that evolution was seen to have two poles: progress and degeneration. 'Evolution' was translated as *jinhua*, or 'transformation forwards', its antipode 'devolution' as *tuihua*, meaning 'transformation backwards'. Devolution faced evolution: both concepts rapidly became popular in the periodical press and beyond, particularly in

the early twentieth century, an era marked by the dissolution of Confucianism and the disintegration of a millenarian imperial system. Anxiety over degeneration and racial extinction became the counterpoint of the cult of progress.[37]

Racial preservation

Within an evolutionary view of struggle for survival between different 'races', nationalism was seen to be a key to the future by many Chinese students in Japan during the first decade of the twentieth century.[38] The number of students in that country increased steadily after 1900 to exceed 10,000 by 1906. Although most students initially grouped according to their province of origin, they were quick to develop a strong feeling of national belonging.[39]

The very term of 'nationalism' was borrowed from the Japanese: *Minzuzhuyi*, from the Japanese *minzokushugi*, exerted a lasting influence on the political terminology of the students.[40] As we have seen, 'race' and 'nation' overlapped in the term *minzu*, whereas *zhuyi* meant 'ism'.[41] The constant juxtaposition of *guo*, 'country', to *zhong*, 'race', in set phrases like 'love the race and love the country' (*aizhongaiguo*), or 'national boundaries and racial boundaries' (*guojiezhongjie*) also contributed to portraying the 'nation' as something more than just a political arrangement: it was understood to be an organic entity based on fictive biological boundaries. The *guo*, as one nationalist explained, was not merely an expression of geography—it had a racial foundation.[42] Even Yan Fu publicly declared that 'the sentiment of patriotism is rooted in racial nature'.[43]

Racial survival lay at the root of the radical students' concern with national cohesion. The first issue of the *Tides of Zhejiang*, a nationalist journal published in Japan by Chinese students, stated that 'those who can assemble their own tribe into an organised body able to resist other groups will survive.' In an era dominated by racial competition, the key to survival lay in the cohesive force of the group (*qunli*). Nationalism fostered unity, as it 'erects borders against the outside and unites the group inside'.[44] A contributor to the journal *Yunnan* attributed the decline of the 'barbarian red and the savage black races' to their ignorance of the racial principles of

nationalism: a nation needed a 'group strategy and group strength' (*quncequnli*).[45]

World politics were expounded in terms of racial cohesion. India, it was explained, had been conquered by the 'white race' because its caste system inhibited racial homogeneity.[46] Russians were a 'crossbreed between Europeans and Asians and nothing else', claimed another polemicist. A cranial analysis and a detailed racial investigation revealed that the Russians had Asian blood running in their veins. This racial mixture was responsible for Russia's inability to cohere.[47] The naval superiority of the United States, on the other hand, was ascribed to the racial quality of their people: were not the Americans an inch taller than the English?[48]

The overlap between race and nation spread to most of the writings of the young radicals. Education, for instance, was seen unanimously as a means of 'uniting the race' in its struggle for survival.[49] An article entitled 'Iron-Blooded Education' blamed the traditional education system for having lost its 'racial nature' (*zhongxing*): excessive assimilation of 'alien races' had led to the dilution of Han blood. A new iron-blooded education would have to develop a 'racial ideology' (*zhongzu sixiang*).[50] Ye Xuesheng echoed the educator's concern by deploring the excessively universalistic orientation of Confucianism, which had to be replaced by 'racial thought'.[51] Another utopian proclaimed that physical education would prevent the 'withering of the race',[52] whereas an enthusiastic reviewer praised physical exercise as beneficial to 'the strengthening of the race and the protection of the country'.[53] Medicine was also viewed as instrumental in China's racial renaissance.[54] Even gender equality, a major blow against Confucian patriarchy, was envisaged as a means of struggling against the 'white race': had not the Ming loyalist Gu Yanwu written that 'husband and wife both have a share of responsibility for the fate of the country'?[55]

Despite the mounting tide of anti-Manchuism, the student journals continued to focus on the 'white race'.[56] A characteristic biography of Koxinga, the famous warrior-general who opposed the Manchus in the seventeenth century, concluded with a panegyric to his racial achievements:

> The whites are the proud sons of heaven [a title normally reserved for 'the descendants of the Yellow Emperor']. They press on the blacks, and the blacks decline; they push down the reds and the reds are destroyed; they erase the browns and the browns die out. Now they display their devilish tricks and lie in wait for us yellows; they are on the watch for us the yellow Han race. Some centuries ago,

Genghis Khan was the only one who could resist them. I disdain to worship him: the Mongol race was the public enemy of the Han race. I disdain to worship him, and only adore Zheng Chenggong [Koxinga]. He was able to make the Dutch, who launched European power, hold back and give way. He was able to make the Manchus, after they enslaved the Han race, engage in battle.[57]

The racial imagery of the radical students was not fundamentally different from the categories that had been developed by the reformers. There was a distinct continuity between the discourse of race as lineage to that of race as nation. People were categorised according to a strict racial hierarchy; history became a battlefield for contending races; politics was an arena for struggling nations. Tales of the 'white peril' were counterbalanced by fantasies of yellow domination: one contributor assessed the possibility of a 'yellow peril',[58] another presented a translation from the Japanese about the imminent extinction of the 'white race' and the advent of a 'yellow age of One World' (*datong*).[59]

A sense of racial pride distinguished the revolutionaries from the reformers. Student writings consistently reported the humiliating treatment and derogatory pronouncements to which the Chinese were subjected. Europeans, it was revealed, claimed that the Chinese would soon degenerate into animals.[60] The Japanese called them an 'ignoble race' (*jianzhong*) and 'inferior animals' (*liedeng dongwu*).[61] Westerners laughed at the Chinese 'pigtail'; Japanese referred to the Chinese as *chanchanbotsu* ('chink').[62]

The most notable event reported in the press was perhaps the students' successful opposition to an 'Exhibition of the Races of Man' at Osaka in 1903. The exhibition initially planned to group the 'inferior races' of China, Korea, the Ryukyu Islands, India, Hawaii, Taiwan and Java under the heading of 'raw barbarian races' (*shengfanzhong*). Student outrage culminated in an official protest against the inclusion of China in the exhibition. 'Although we Chinese are inferior, why should we have to be classified together with these six races?', lamented one protester.[63]

The theme of humiliation still pervades nationalist writings to this day. It was part of a conscious effort to instil a sense of outrage in readers in the hope that they would join the effort at nationalist revival. Humiliation, real or imagined, implied a sense of collective responsibility: the causes of failure could be attributed to the population's lack of effort or ability, not to external factors independent of human will. It was voluntaristic and directly

opposed fatalism. Self-accusation went hand in hand with the rallying cry of nationalism. The nation was guilty of failure: 'We Chinese are less than black slaves' was a common expression. Humiliation fostered outrage and created a sense of resentment that was favourable to the nationalist message.

To boost the morale of the 'race', the radicals pointed to people who fared even less well than the Chinese. The Jews often compensated for the alleged humilation of the Han:

> Alas! How could I falsely pity the Jew? I cannot but pity the Jew. I do not pity the Jew of the past, I pity the Jew of the future. Jew! Jew! Tiny reflection of the prospect of our own country. The old Jew goes, the new Jew comes, but the misery of the new Jew surpasses the misery of the old Jew. Alas, when I write these words, the tear stains want to father traces of blood [sic], the traces of blood want to dry up in black marks.[64]

Clearly, Chinese interest in the fate of the 'stateless Jews' was justified only if it could reflect the imaginary prospect of their own nation. In reality, students actually 'warned themselves to refrain from looking down upon the Jews'.[65] Contempt for Jews, and even a feeling of hatred towards them, remained vivid for decades. Wu Zelin, an outstanding anthropologist active in the 1930s, later recalled that he and his colleagues used to find the Jews 'laughable, despicable, pitiable, admirable, enviable, and hateful'.[66]

The fact that racial ideas were more than just 'a propaganda tactic'—as a leading expert on the revolutionary movement has maintained—becomes evident when one abandons the main body of political texts to venture into the short notes and anecdotes scattered throughout student publications.[67] A qualitative analysis of such seemingly cursory material can provide invaluable insights into the revolutionaries' ideas about 'race'. An enduring interest in human evolution was reflected in short reports on new anthropological findings. A note entitled 'A strange race of men', for instance, described a tribe newly discovered in New Guinea. They were unable to walk, moved about by swinging from tree to tree, had atrophied feet and resembled apes.[68] Another writer established statistics on the comparative height of different nationalities.[69] One anecdote misinterpreted a traditional African rite of passage: 'We know that if a black's blood mixes with another race, his black colour will gradually diminish. They dislike the ugliness of blackness, and often smear their faces with white powder.'[70] Many items briefly described how foreigners humiliated the Chinese.

Westerners regarded the Chinese as an inferior and uneducated race of slaves. But even the 'black slaves' in the United States were educated: was this not a source of shame for the civilised Han?[71]

Racial ancestry

The myth of blood was sealed by elevating the figure of the Yellow Emperor to a national symbol. The Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi*) was a mythical figure thought to have reigned from 2697 to 2597 BC. He was hailed as the first ancestor (*shizu*) of the Han, and his portrait served as frontispiece in many nationalist publications.[72] From mid-1903, the radical magazines started using dates based on the supposed year of birth of the Yellow Emperor. Liu Shipei's (1884–1919) first published article advocated the introduction of a calendar in which year zero corresponded to the birth of the Yellow Emperor. 'They [the reformers] see the preservation of religion [*baojiao*] as a handle, so they use the birth of Confucius as the starting date of the calendar; the purpose of our generation is the preservation of the race [*baozhong*], so we use the birth of the Yellow Emperor as a founding date.'[73] Liu Shipei estimated that the Yellow Emperor had ascended the throne in his eleventh year. The Mongolian barbarians had destroyed the Song in 3993, the Manchus had captured Shanhaiguan in 4359, and the international expedition had entered Beijing in 4611: all were foreign races that had forcibly occupied the territory of the descendants of the Yellow Emperor, the Han 'race'. The Yellow Emperor remained a powerful figure for many decades. Despite the historian Gu Jiegang's repeated criticism of the myth in the 1920s,[74] he was still officially revered in 1941 as the founder of the nation and initiator of the 'race'.[75]

Traditional ideas reinforced racial categories of analysis. Confucian values of filial piety and ancestor worship paved the way for the cult of the Yellow Emperor. Racial loyalty was perceived as an extension of lineage loyalty. The revolutionary Chen Tianhua (1875–1905) integrated these values in his influential pamphlets, read throughout the Yangzi valley:[76] 'As the saying goes, a man is not close to people of another family [*xing*, 'surname']. When two families fight each other, one surely assists one's own family, one definitely does not help the foreign [*wai*, 'exterior'] family.

Common families all descend from one original family: the Han race is one big family. The Yellow Emperor is the great ancestor, all those who are not of the Han race are not the descendants of the Yellow Emperor, they are exterior families. One should definitely not assist them; if one assists them, one lacks a sense of ancestry.'[77] Kinship terms were infused into a racial discourse that called forth emotional expressions usually reserved for close relatives: 'Racial feelings begin at birth. For the members of one's own race, there is surely mutual intimacy and love; for the members of a foreign race, there is surely mutual savagery and killing.'[78]

The young revolutionary Zou Rong also regretted the absence of a strong 'racial consciousness' (*zhongxing*) in China capable of uniting the population in their struggle against oppressors. Zou greeted the 'peasants with weatherbeaten faces and mud-caked hands and feet' as his genuine countrymen, the proud descendants of the Yellow Emperor.[79] Race was the catalyst of national solidarity; it created clear boundaries between insiders and outsiders: 'When men love their race, solidarity will arise internally, and what is outside will be repelled. Hence, to begin with, lineages were united and other lineages repelled; next, villages were united and other villages repelled; thereafter, tribes were united and other tribes were repelled; finally, the people of a country became united, and people of other countries were repelled. This is the general principle of the races of the world, and also a major reason why races engender history. I will demonstrate to my countrymen, to allow them to form their own impression, how our yellow race, the yellow race of which the Han race is part, and I refer you to the history of China, is able to unite itself and repel intruders.'[80] It was the unchanging norm of race which distinguished 'the kinsmen and fellow countrymen of our great Han race' from 'barbarians',[81] in particular the Manchus. The Manchus were to be excluded from the unsullied Han race: 'What you, fellow countrymen, today call court, government or emperor are what we once called barbarians (of North, South, East or West), Hsiung-nu or Tartars. These tribes, living beyond the Shanhaikuan, were not by origin of the same race as the illustrious descendants of our Yellow Emperor. Their land is a foul land, they are of a furry race, their hearts are beasts' hearts, their customs are the customs of the users of wool, their writing is different from ours, and their clothes are different from ours.'[82]

Classification further emphasised the original differences that existed between the Han and the Manchus. Zou divided the yellow race into two main branches, the 'races of China', including the Han, the Tibetan and the Cochinese races; and the 'races of Siberia', composed of the Mongolian, the Tungus and the Turkic peoples.[83] The principal enemy was the 'white race':

> The yellow and white races which are to be found on the globe have been endowed by nature with intelligence and fighting capacity. They are fundamentally incapable of giving way to each other. Hence, glowering and poised for the fight, they have engaged in battle in the world of evolution, the great arena where strength and intelligence have clashed since earliest times, the great theatre where for so long natural selection and progress have been played out.[84]

Racial origins

The revolutionaries differed in their interpretation of human origins. Liu Yazi, for instance, believed that each race had its own origin.[85] Most, however, portrayed the Yellow Emperor as the progenitor of the Han.

One particular line of thought associated the Yellow Emperor with Westerners. A group of scholars concerned with protecting the country's heritage, often referred to as the National Essence circle from the name of the *Journal of National Essence* (*Guocui xuebao*) which they established in 1905, borrowed extensively from the historian Terrien de Lacouperie to corroborate the belief in a common origin between Europeans and Chinese. As noted in the preceding chapter, key sections of the *Western Origins of the Early Chinese Civilisation* were eventually translated by Jiang Zhiyou and published between October 1903 and January 1905 in Liang Qichao's *New People's Journal*.[86]

In his *Western Origins of the Early Chinese Civilisation*, Lacouperie had put forward a theory on the derivative nature of the 'Chinese race':[87] a small number of families in possession of a comparatively advanced civilisation arrived in China around the twenty-third century BC. These immigrants were the Bak Sings, who had originated in the vicinity of Elam and Babylonia and were directly connected with the Sumero-Akkadians. The Bak Sings were headed by the Yellow Emperor, whose name was similar to Kudur Nakhunti, the generic title of the kings of Susiana. The Yellow Emperor led his people to the south-west of present-day Gansu, where he eventually founded the Chinese Kingdom. The Baks were initially hemmed in by native states inhabited by the *limin*, or black-headed people,

but these were gradually forced into submission by conquest and intermarriage until the eventual establishment of a Chinese dominion on both sides of the Yellow River.

Terrien de Lacouperie's hypothesis about the Western origins of the Chinese was introduced in the first issue of the *Journal of National Essence*. This periodical was dedicated to the preservation of the essence (*guocui*) of Chinese civilisation, which was thought to be threatened with extinction. For the National Essence group, the Yellow Emperor represented the Chinese race, but it was underlined that 'the race did not start with the Yellow Emperor'.[88] Huang Jie, a key figure of the National Essence group, introduced Lacouperie in his 'Yellow History' and identified the Yellow Emperor as the progenitor of the race, an offshoot of Western stock.[89]

Zhang Binglin was one of the more complex figures among the nationalists.[90] His philosophical approach, inspired mainly by Yogacara Buddhism and Daoism, questioned Western notions such as progress and social evolution. As a politically engaged intellectual, one of his main contributions was a nationalist vision expressed in terms of blood and soil. It should be emphasised, however, that racial ideas were but one aspect in a very complex body of work, the discussion of which is beyond the scope of this book. Until 1898, Zhang's overriding concern was the confrontation between what he considered to be 'superior races', namely the 'white race' and the 'yellow race'.[91] Zhang interpreted Europe as another Middle Kingdom. The racial equivalence of Chinese and Western civilisation was supported by Terrien de Lacouperie's theory of a common origin in the ancient Near East.[92] In convergence with Lacouperie, Zhang argued that humanity had originated from one race, but he inverted the usual perspective by suggesting that the original 'race' had been yellow and had migrated to China under the Yellow Emperor. Zhang's perspective underlined the organic continuity of the 'yellow race' and pointed to the derivative nature of the 'white race'. The white race was as virtuous, intelligent and skilled as the yellow race: had not the ancients called Rome the Great Qin (*Daqin*)?[93]

Zhang's concept of race was based on the traditional distinction between the civilised (*wen*) and the uncultured (*ye*). Both the white and the yellow races were surrounded by barbarian tribes. He compared the backward tribes within China to the degenerate 'races' beyond its borders.[94] The

contrast between civilised Han and untamed Rong, derived from the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, was woven into Zhang's personal theory of evolution.[95] Zhang opposed culturally evolved humans (*ren*) to biologically degenerated animals (*shou*). Racial science was blended with traditional imagery: 'The size of blood vessels is big only in animals, whereas the facial angle is only high among raw barbarians; this is what civilised races have in common.'[96] Barbarian tribes, unlike the civilised yellow and white races, were the biological descendants of lower species: the Di had been generated by dogs, and the Jiang could trace their ancestry back to sheep.[97]

Zhang's strong interest in the Yogacara concept of man led him to adopt an evolutionary theory that emphasised the innate tendency of people to be morally good as well as evil. Refuting the unilinear approach of popular Lamarckism, he viewed evolution as a malleable phenomenon capable of both reversals and advances. Zhang admitted that all people had originally evolved from primates, but claimed that from the outset they had been unequal.

Four processes of increased differentiation determined the degree of evolution: 'Environmental differentiation made the skin colour change, sexual differentiation made the skeleton change, social differentiation made the customs change, contractual differentiation made the language change.' Race and culture were seen as mutually dependent in this process of transformation. 'Differences between tribes exist as a result of the time of civilisation, differences between civilised people and barbarians exist as a result of a cultured or uncouth nature.' Cultural degeneracy would have its biological consequences: 'People who are indolent in the use of their intelligence will waste away and become macaques and long-tailed monkeys.'[98]

Racial nationalism

The leading group of nationalists was the Tongmenghui, founded by Sun Yatsen in 1905.[99] Sun Yatsen (1866–1925) was considered the leader of the revolution in 1911. He was the first head of the Guomindang, a political party established in Hawaii in 1894, and is known to this day as the 'father of the nation'. His ideas would have a lasting influence on Chinese politics, and this section will briefly consider his principle of racial nationalism (*minzuzhuyi*), since it was adopted as official policy under the Guomindang.

Racial nationalism was one of the 'Three Principles of the People' (*sanminzhuyi*) that Sun elaborated throughout his life. The Three Principles embodied the programme of the national government after 1911, and their importance is reflected in the fact that they were even adopted as the title of the national anthem of the Republic of China.

As one historian of the Three Principles has argued, 'Sun Yat-sen made his appeal to an emerging national consciousness, strongest in its racial form of prejudice against foreigners; he appealed also to fear.'[100] In line with other revolutionaries both at home and abroad, Sun claimed that only nationalism could forestall racial destruction. This idea was shared, for instance, with the Italian fascists. As A. James Gregor has shown, nationalists in China and in Italy used a standard biological conception of 'race', promoted mass mobilisation of the national community and were hostile to both individualism and cosmopolitanism.[101]

Sun Yatsen, in common with most reformers and radical students in China, portrayed the Han as a pure biological entity:

> Considering the law of survival of ancient and modern races, if we want to save China and to preserve the Chinese race, we must certainly promote Nationalism. To make this principle luminous for China's salvation, we must first understand it clearly. The Chinese race totals four hundred million people; of mingled races there are only a few million Mongolians, a million or so Manchus, a few million Tibetans, and over a million Mohammedan Turks. These alien races do not number altogether more than ten million, so that, for the most part, the Chinese people are of the Han or Chinese race with common blood, common language, common religion, and common customs—a single, pure race.[102]

Sun's worldview—one shared by many political activists in China—was dominated by the idea of a confrontation between the yellow and the white races.[103] In unison with the reformers, Sun declared that:

> Mankind is divided first into the five main races—white, black, red, yellow, brown. Dividing further, we have many sub-races, as the Asiatic races—Mongolian, Malay, Japanese, Manchurian and Chinese. The forces which developed these races were, in general, natural forces, but when we try to analyse them we find they are very complex. The greatest force is common blood. Chinese belong to the yellow race because they come from the blood stock of the yellow race. The blood of ancestors is transmitted by heredity down through the race, making blood kinship a powerful force.[104]

Sun Yatsen's writings were not particularly original, but they had a lasting political influence. His principle of racial nationalism expressed in simple terms the racial theories prevalent among the revolutionaries and embodied the main strains of thought described in the last two chapters.

In contrast to the reformers, who expressed their ideas of social and political change in a framework still dominated by references to the past, the nationalists successfully broke away from the Confucian tradition. They elaborated a racial theory that focused narrowly on the Han, who were pictured as a perennial biological unit engendered by a mythological ancestor. Until 1915, however, the nationalist vision of blood and soil remained confined to the political arena. With the New Culture Movement, racial theories would reach a much wider audience, as we see in the next two chapters.

5

RACE AS SPECIES (1915–1949)

Introduction

Even in the years immediately following the fall of the Manchu dynasty, racial theories were confined mainly to political texts concerned with reform or revolution. But racial discourse was given a new leash of life by the New Culture Movement. As the Republic of China, established in 1912 to put an end to the problems created by the Qing, seemed to be floundering, widespread disillusionment with traditional culture set in. Scholars and students rebelled against Confucianism and called for the creation of a new culture based on modern values, in particular democracy and science. This iconoclastic campaign was most pronounced in the cities along the coast, where the social structure was evolving rapidly in the wake of the revolution against the Qing.

The First World War was a prosperous period for coastal regions, which benefited economically from the fall of the imperial system and its restrictions on commerce as well as from the decline of European trade. During this 'golden age' of economic expansion, cities like Beijing, Tianjin, Nanjing, Shanghai, Wuhan and Canton became outposts of modernisation, where local politicians and influential intellectuals rubbed shoulders with teachers, journalists and clerks, while wealthy entrepreneurs mingled with artisans, small shopkeepers and industrial workers.[1]

Nationalism was a prominent feature of the coastal civilisation. The entire social structure was imbued with a sense of national renewal, which encompassed far-reaching questions about collective identity: after the collapse of a millenarian empire, what was China and who were the Chinese? These issues were a vital aspect of the New Culture Movement, which thrived thanks to new forms of expression, in particular the *baihua* vernacular style of writing. In a new, colloquial idiom that was much closer

to the spoken language of ordinary people, followers of the New Culture Movement turned away from the classics, attacked traditional ethics and introduced science and democracy instead.

The widespread need for a new culture, distinct from the Confucian heritage yet able to provide a sense of meaning and continuity in a modern world, was largely articulated by the intelligentsia. Many young intellectuals (*zhishifenzi*, a newly coined term), often educated in either Japan or the West, were determined to integrate foreign science and culture into their society. They urged their readers to part with what they called the 'stagnant elements' of 'traditional culture' and to accept foreign democracy, science and culture as the founding elements of a new order. Western thought thus came to play a central role in the effort of cultural reconstruction. If opinions diverged about the extent to which the country should be 'westernised' (*xihua*), most intellectuals agreed that the West was the ultimate norm by which change should be measured.

Through a process of polarisation, the 'West' was forced into an artificial relationship of opposites with 'Confucianism'. This binary vision rested largely upon the substance-application school (*tiyong*) formulated by the 1860 generation of reformers and was expanded during the New Culture Movement. Similarities between China and the West were discarded, continuities were ignored, analogies were rejected; the diversity of human experience was forcibly channelled into opposed directions. The radical reformer Chen Duxiu, like so many of his contemporaries, focused only on what he perceived as the 'fundamental' differences between China and the West, the 'yellow' and the 'white' 'races': the West was individualistic, China was communalistic; the West was utilitarian, China was ritualistic, Westerners emphasised struggle, the Chinese preferred tranquillity.[2] This dualistic vision was given its quintessential expression by the conservative Liang Shuming: the East was 'spiritual', the West was 'materialistic'. Whether as an idealised version of itself or as a polluted alien, the West became China's *alter ego*.

With the collapse of the imperial system and the attack on the Confucian world order, the West was used as the ultimate source of authority. The reformers of the nineteenth century had used the *tiyong* concept: the *ti* (substance) applied to China, the *yong* (application) to the West: 'Chinese learning for substance, Western learning for practical application' (*Zhong wei ti, Xi wei yong*). By placing China and the West in a dialectical relation

of *ti* and *yong*, the reformers had exposed the authority of Confucianism to doubt. In his *Kongzi gaizhi kao* (Confucius as a reformer) of 1897, Kang Youwei had revisited the classics to represent Confucius as a progressive reformer. With the fading away of Confucian authority at the beginning of the twentieth century, 'Western thought' was compelled to cover cultural iconoclasm with a cloak of authority. But in many cases the relationship to foreign systems of thought was indirect and oblique, and at times minimal. Attitudes of course varied from author to author. Hu Shi, for instance, was a renowned intellectual, deeply committed to foreign schools of philosophy such as Dewey's pragmatism. But certainly in the early years of the republic, some students rather enthusiastically attributed their own thoughts to the West, much as Abelard of Bath ascribed his own ideas to Islamic thought during the Middle Ages when there was an infatuation with Islamic science. This was particularly evident in the many textbooks, primers and digests that poured forth from the presses of republican China, introducing the reading public to this or that aspect of the West in an often highly simplified manner.

Despite these limitations, an extraordinary amount of hithero unavailable information about the world found its way to the reading public, just as water seeps through parched earth. And this, in turn, introduced a comparative perspective that stimulated all kinds of creative ideas. The entire republican era could very well be qualified as a golden age of engagement with the world, as people, things and ideas moved in and out of the country. These global flows fostered an unprecedented degree of diversity. By the end of the republican era, professional academics were able to match their foreign peers in many fields, ranging from avionics to zoology. People of all walks of life were often familiar with the world beyond their community, as illustrated magazines and radio programmes disseminated information about every aspect of the modern world, whether new agricultural techniques or the fluctuating price of silk on the international market. Striking developments also took place in the social sciences, especially anthropology, ethnology, biology, human geography and demography.[3]

This chapter looks at the spread of racial discourse in the Republic of China from 1912 to 1949. The sources include newspapers, popular periodicals, introductions to biology, medicine, evolution, anthropology and genetics, primers on science, medical handbooks, marriage guides,

schoolbooks and even caricatures. Most of these publications were written in simplified vernacular, produced as cheaply as possible and widely distributed in all major cities. They addressed readers across the social spectrum, and became particularly popular among the new social classes along the country's coastal civilisation.

The periodical press, which had been launched by the reformers in the 1890s, played a particularly prominent role. A wide variety of specialised magazines and periodicals were introduced during the New Culture Movement, managed by established publishing companies or by independent associations. Many sought to popularise science, to introduce foreign schools of thought and to build up a new culture. Periodicals became so popular that writers often chose to contribute articles rather than write books. The spread of the periodical press was supported by the rise of new publishing houses, the introduction of modern printing methods, the growth of a modern education system after the abolition of the imperial examination system in 1905, the spread of educational associations and, more generally, by a general increase in functional literacy. The *Eastern Miscellany* (*Dongfang zazhi*), for instance, achieved a circulation of 45,000 in 1931, and a single issue might be consulted by ten to twenty readers.[4] Copies were deposited in public libraries and reading rooms and were frequently rented, resold or loaned.

Many of the publications consulted for this study were published as part of popular self-study series, or *congshu*. *Congshu* books were written by members of the academic community, yet they reached a large readership; some used only a limited vocabulary and an elementary grammar to ensure the widest possible circulation. Wang Yunwu, who from 1921 onwards became editor-in-chief of the huge Commercial Press, applied the notion of 'mass production' to *congshu* books, lowering production costs and extending the distribution network.[5] These books became very popular during the 1930s, and had a significant influence on the shaping of urban culture in republican China.

Some authors had participated in the revolution of 1911, many were active during the New Culture Movement, and quite a few filled prominent positions in the new colleges and universities established after the collapse of the empire. They maintained close links with one another and forged academic networks for mutual support.[6] The returned students were as small a proportion of the entire population as the metropolitan graduates

(*jinshi*) had been in imperial China. Some were direct descendants of reknowned scholar families. Pan Guangdan, for example, was a graduate of Columbia University; his father had been a member of the prestigious Hanlin Academy under the Qing. Like their imperial predecessors, the newly educated elite firmly believed that the scholar should operate on behalf of society as a whole. Having grown up in an age of rapid political change, they were convinced that national reconstruction was the responsibility of the intellectual elite. They also took upon themselves the task of promoting science and bringing knowledge to the wider public. China, wrote Hu Shi in 1915, needed a form of government that would 'enable the enlightened class of people to utilise their knowledge and talents for the education and betterment of the ignorant and indifferent'. Jiang Menglin, a prominent educator, commented that 'our motto is government of the people, for the people, and by the educated class.'[7] From benevolent Confucian scholar to activist republican intellectual was only a small step.

Origins

The search for racial origins continued unabated after the fall of the empire, but was now carried out in the name of science. Wei Juxian, for instance, published an important article in the journal *Forwards* on the origins of the Han 'race'. Wei was born in 1898, was attached to Beijing Normal University as a researcher, and accepted a professorship at Jinan National University in Shanghai in 1933. He had numerous official positions and was considered a specialist in the conservation of archaeological artefacts. After the communist takeover in 1949 he moved to Taiwan, where he authored a study showing how the Chinese had originally discovered America.

In his 1933 article, Wei identified the Xia, named after the first dynasty in China to be described in ancient historical chronicles, as the genuine descendants of the Yellow Emperor. Many historical documents were produced to demonstrate that the Xia had deep-set eyes, high noses and beards similar to those of the Aryans. 'The Xia race's physical appearance, language, customs and clothes are all similar to those of the Aryan race, of which those who are heavily bearded are Caucasians.'[8] The Yin descended from the Emperor Yan and had intermarried with the Xia to generate the Han 'race'. Wei situated the Xia's original homeland in the Caucasus. They were a 'white' and 'pure' race. The Yin were 'red barbarians' from an area

of China now known as Sichuan province. The mixing of white and red had given birth to the yellow Han. Wei Juxian maintained the idea of racial purity by locating the source of pollution in an alien group: southern barbarians had undermined the original purity of the divine descendants of the Yellow Emperor.[9]

Chinese scientists of international repute were also in search of purity. Li Ji published *The Formation of the Chinese People: An Anthropological Inquiry* with Harvard University Press in 1928.[10] Li contested the idea that the Chinese had been an unchanging and homogeneous people. He began by gathering all the data available on Chinese skulls, and found that 14.41 per cent were dolichocephalic (a long and narrow shaped head), 42.12 per cent mesocephalic (an intermediate shape) and only 43.47 per cent brachycephalic (a broad shaped head). Li also measured noses, and discovered that the platyrrhinic type (flat nose) was a minor element in the physical make-up of Chinese physical traits. Results were distributed by province. Li then reconstructed the routes along which cities had evolved in order to follow the historical movements of what he called the 'We-Group'. This painstaking exercise was based on the records of 4,478 city walls, thus enabling building activity in different provinces at different periods to be charted. In a chapter on surnames, Li assumed that surnames of the same origin denoted a blood relationship. The term 'We-Group' came to signify the 'Descendants of the Yellow Emperor': Li attempted to disentangle the original surnames created by the Yellow Emperor from the surnames of other people. He classified 4,657 names on the basis of ethnic and geographical significance in sixty-two maps. Finally, he took the study of the migration of the Yellow Emperor's descendants further by investigating the census figures appearing in the official dynastic histories of China.

The conclusion Li Ji drew from all the evidence he had gathered so meticulously was that the prevalent type of the 'original race' was brachy-cephalic-leptorrhine (small nose). A group of narrow-headed Tungus were responsible for diluting the divine race of the Yellow Emperor by intermarriage. The Tungus were a group of people from Siberia, of which the Manchus were thought to be a branch. Li Chi ended his inquiry on a note of hope: 'In the future one may expect a continued leptorrhinisation of the south and a rebrachycephalisation of the north', a process by which the pure type of the Yellow Emperor would come to replace the inferior elements of China's racial composition.

Some archaeologists, too, sought evidence of human beginnings in China. Lin Yan, for instance, carefully examined all the theories that traced the origins of the 'Chinese race' to alien migrations: all lacked 'scientific proof'. Like others, he cited the discovery of Beijing Man at Zhoukoudian as evidence that the soil of the Middle Kingdom had been inhabited since the earliest stage of human history. Excavations supported his hypothesis by demonstrating that migrations had taken place only within the empire. It was concluded that China was inhabited by 'the earth's most ancient original inhabitants'.[11]

Both Li Ji and Lin Yan used their discoveries to propose a vision of the nation which actually included 'minority peoples'. They suggested that all inhabitants of China had descended from a common ancestor. In doing so, they anticipated a much broader definition of the nation which would become common in the People's Republic after 1978, as we see in the last chapter of this book.

But most researchers focused on the Han. Zhang Junjun's search for purity, for instance, revolved around the concept of blood. He was born in 1897 in Hunan province, taught anthropology at Jinan National University in Shanghai, and became a popular writer on the idea of racial degeneration. He studied psychology with Robert Woodworth at Columbia University, but read anthropology and eugenics—the pseudoscience of race improvement—in his spare time. The premise of Zhang's approach was that all the ancestors of the Han 'race' had O group blood flowing in their veins, a purity subsequently vitiated by intermarriage with barbarians.[12] Each province was analysed and classified according to blood type. The A group was predominant in the north, where the original O group had been bastardised by frequent foreign invasions. In Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, however, the O group was found in more than 50 per cent of the population, whereas in the south it hovered around 40 per cent. The results of Zhang's inquiry demonstrated that the nation was a mixed association of an original race, preserved mainly in the region of the Yangzi River (Jiangsu and Zhejiang), and a variety of barbarian tribes.

Next Zhang tried to find out in which provinces the greatest concentrations of intellect could be found. He classified 15,089 famous historical personages by home province. The majority, unsurprisingly, came from Jiangsu (2,428) and Zhejiang (1,974), the two provinces where the original 'race' was supposed to dominate, ranking far above other regions

(Hunan held third place with 1,200 historical figures; at the bottom was Heilongjiang province with a mere dozen). Zhang thus reconstructed the itinerary of the original 'race': the first branch of healthy and superior (*youxiu*) Han, taught by the Gods and blessed by Heaven, had moved into the Yellow River region. Barbarian invasions, famine and internecine wars had caused migrations towards the region around the Yangzi River. During both phases, the original race had degenerated by intermarriage with inferior tribes.

Like many other intellectuals of the 1930s, Zhang Junjun was inspired by the pioneering study of Liang Boqiang on the Han race's blood. Liang took the blood's 'index of agglutination' as an indicator of purity. He maintained that the Han were 'purer' in the south, where it had never intermarried with barbarians. The index of Guangdong province, for instance, was the highest in the country.[13]

The idea of degeneration by infusions of inferior blood was not universally accepted. The historian Gu Jiegang pointed at the contributions of non-Han peoples through cultural admixture as well as biological amalgamation.[14] Lin Yutang, professor of literature, journalist and writer of popular books, was also a typical exponent of the theory of 'blood infusion'. In his widely read *My Country and My People* he could certify that each foreign invasion had been conducive to 'a kind of phylogenetic monkey-gland grafting [sic], for one observes a new bloom of culture after each introduction of new blood.'[15] The nation's racial vigour was explained by the periodic addition of fresh plasma, a phenomenon thought to have occurred with striking regularity in the country's history.

Colour

Racial theories gained institutional grounding after the revolution of 1911. Chen Yinghuang, who was born in Hunan in 1877 and became a radical student in Japan around the turn of the century, was appointed as the first professor of physical anthropology at Beijing University. In 1918 he produced a comprehensive survey of 'human races' which perpetuated the tension between hierarchy and unity so common among racial thinkers.[16] In his preface he claimed that all people contributed equally to humanity, regardless of their skin colour or 'degree of evolution'. The imposition of a hierarchical vision on the conceptual unity of all humans, reminiscent of

Kang Youwei's *datong*, was embedded in his opening definition of anthropology: 'Anthropology studies all races, from the Chinese and the English down to the dwarf slave and the black slave.'[17]

Like other anthropological studies in republican China, Professor Chen's book was highly critical of racial theories that purported to demonstrate the superiority of Europeans and their descendants. Whiteness as a factor in racial categorisation was dismissed as pure myth. Chen noted that Europeans rarely had white skin, as it was often stained by impure brown particles. A genuine white complexion was to be found only among the northern Europeans, but even they turned dark under the tropical sun; their skin peeled and became freckled. He quoted a Japanese scientist who had apparently demonstrated that Europeans, too, had spotted buttocks.[18]

Chen's work was echoed by a popular *Précis of Human Physiological Health Science*, published in 1921, which explained how the quantity of 'pigment granules' in the epidermis accounted for the 'different colours' of the human race.[19] This explanation was adopted by some writers critical of skin tone as a measure of superiority. Too few authors, unfortunately, extended these critical comments to Africans by noting that racial theories were based only on a spoonful of melanin.

The variability of skin colour was often underlined. In his *History of the Progress of Mankind and Culture* (1926), Gong Tingzhang asserted that even some Africans could acquire a light complexion. Southern Europeans were dark, whereas Nordics revealed a pink hue, as blood vessels ran underneath a translucent skin. The United States was also undergoing a racial mutation: blacks were turning white, whereas whites were becoming 'slightly red, the hair increasingly dark, the cheekbones more protuberant and the lower jaw larger'.[20] Gong Tingzhang was a professor of literature in various institutes of higher learning, including Beijing Normal University. His book was published by the Commercial Press as part of a cheap *congshu* series written in the vernacular for mass consumption.

Higher spheres of academic research also toyed with the concept of skin colour. Zhu Xi, a professor at Sun Yatsen University in Canton and a specialist in the field of artificial parthenogenesis in Chinese frogs, published a study on human ancestry. He distinguished ten shades of skin colour: pure white (no example was given), red-white (Scandinavians, North Germans, English), ash-white (Mediterranean), dark yellow

(American Indians, Indo-Malaysians, Polynesians), yellow-brown (Malaysians), red-brown, black-brown (Australians), deep brown, black, and pure yellow, reserved for the Chinese. Zhu Xi reclassified the American Indians as 'American yellows'.[21]

Hair

Pruner-Bey's classic article 'Chevelure comme Charactéristique des Races Humaines' was published in 1863, but hair remained relatively unimportant in physical anthropology. Although some writers divided hair into a 'leiotrichous' type (straight and wavy, i.e. European) and a 'ulotrichous' type (crisp, woolly or tufted), skin colour and headshape were the cornerstones of racial categorisation. In China, however, hair sometimes assumed much greater significance. Professor Chen Yinghuang questioned the scientific validity of skin colour, which he rightly regarded as a myth manipulated by arrogant Westerners. His anthropological survey began with a detailed analysis of hair systems. Three pages were devoted to the classification of different types of beards, whiskers and moustaches.[22] Chen Yinghuang subscribed to the neo-Lamarckian paradigm, viewing evolution as an inevitable ascent through a preordained hierarchy of developmental stages. Haeckel's theory of recapitulation was central to this belief: embryological growth was thought to pass through the earlier stages of evolution, starting with the amoeba and ascending to the level of fish, reptile and, finally, mammal. As it evolved in the womb, the human foetus gradually reached the last stage and lost its hair after seven months. Some barbarians had never evolved beyond the simian stage, and retained an overdeveloped hair system. The *wonu* was given as an example. *Wonu*, or 'dwarf slave', was an age-old derogatory term applied to the Japanese. It was also an approximate phonetic transliteration of Ainu, the name of a minority from the Hokkaido region. A drawing depicted a naked *wonu*, heavily bearded and covered with hair from top to toe (see illus. 4).

Zhang Zuoren, professor of zoology at Sun Yatsen University and a colleague of Zhu Xi, also considered the absence of body hair to be the most striking feature among human variations. Like Chen Yinghuang and other scientists of that period, Zhang was not a Darwinian but a neo-Lamarckian who butressed his views with references to Ernst Haeckel. Zhang noted that regression to a previous level of evolution was always

possible, and reprinted a picture of a hirsute man 'born in Russia'. Chinese examples were also provided: in 1921, a certain Miss Wang had given birth to a hairy baby, later exhibited at the Agricultural Experimental Ground in Beijing.[23] Racial atavism highlighted how the beast was lurking just underneath the surface of human civilisation. You Jiade's *Origins of Mankind* (1929) also drew extensively on the theory of recapitulation. The 'fine and long hair' covering the foetus was similar to that of a monkey: it normally fell out at the moment of birth.[24]

Recapitulation was one of the arguments used in support of racial discrimination in the West. 'Coloured people', it was argued, were inferior because they retained certain juvenile traits—and hence were unfit to rule themselves. Lin Yutang, who addressed an English-reading public in his *My Country and My People* (1935), was aware of the misuse of recapitulation theory, and defended his country by distinguishing between race and culture. The Chinese, according to Lin, were culturally old but racially young. Havelock Ellis, who had characterised the 'Asiatics' as racially infantile, was misleading: Lin preferred the term 'prolonged childhood'.[25]

The non-Darwinian model of unilinear evolution had great appeal in the republican era because it underpinned a message of hope: people could change themselves by altering their environment. 'Race' was not a fixed category determined by genes, but a flexible unit open to change. From the communist theories of historical stages to a fascist vision of the millennium, time was viewed along an axis with one direction: forwards. The theory of evolution (*jinhualun*), or 'theory about the transformation forwards', replaced the more traditional opposition between centre and periphery. Gong Tingzhang, like so many others, divided humanity into three stages of civilisation. The lowest stage was reserved for the *shengfan*, or 'raw barbarians': they fed on raw meat, blood, grass and roots, and dwelt in the dark forests of the mountains.[26] These raw barbarians were coated with thick hair. Gong reproduced Chen Yinghuang's drawing of the 'dwarf slave' by way of illustration. 'Cooked' barbarians attained the second level of evolution. The final stage was civilisation. English and Chinese had patches of body hair only on the chest and on the legs. In his *Evolution of Organisms*, Zhu Weiji also asserted that the 'yellows' and 'whites' alone had attained the highest level of civilisation.[27]

Racial theories were often devised by university professors, but they gained a wider audience in booklets and textbooks published in the *congshu* series mentioned above. Zhang Ziping, for instance, was a Japanese-educated mineralogist turned novelist. He wrote several books on geography and evolution for the Commercial Press, as well as a pamphlet on Ernst Haeckel.[28] His widely read *Human Geography* (1924) selected hair as the most reliable standard for racial categorisation. Skin colour was not a genuine factor: some Asians were white, whereas Europeans in Africa could have a 'pure black colour'.[29] Craniology was also dismissed, and here Zhang pointed out that headshape tended to vary very little between different groups of people. Zhang produced a drawing of different hair types that corresponded to his fivefold classification of humanity. Six years later, Zhang listed the straight-haired races (i.e. Chinese) and the curly-haired races as two distinct branches in human biology (straight hair was judged 'more beautiful' than curly hair).[30]

The theory of recapitulation corroborated an age-old link between hair and savagery. Absence of hair from face and body was considered a sign of development. Lin Yutang searched even further for evidence of racial superiority:

> A study of the hair and skin of the [Chinese] people also seems to indicate what must be considered results of millenniums of civilized indoor living. The general lack or extreme paucity of beard on man's face is one instance of such effect, a fact which makes it possible for most Chinese men not to know the use of a personal razor. Hair on men's chests is unknown, and a moustache on a woman's face, not so rare in Europe, is out of the question in China. On good authority from medical doctors, and from references in writing, one knows that a perfectly bare mons veneris is not uncommon in Chinese women.[31]

The association of hairiness with bestiality became a major feature of anti-Japanese caricature during the 1930s.[32] The midget's kimono concealed a coat of bristles and hair, embodying the beast-like attributes of the invader. In many caricatures, the stubbly and furry dwarf was a molester of Chinese virgins, personifying the rape of civilisation by barbarism. The clog and the furry leg, trampling on Chinese sovereignty, became a widely used symbol of Japanese imperialism during the 1930s. Women in kimonos used international treaties to wipe their hairy bottoms, revealing both the island nation's disdain for law and the subhuman features of the female gender. Where claws, fangs and horns emerged, the unregenerate dwarf receded from bestiality into the darkness of devilry. In the pictorial world of

wartime China, ghoulish hobbits roamed lands laid waste by the forces of evil. Westerners also partook in the iconography of malevolence. Drunken, debauched, brutish and loathsome, crouching among moneybags and armaments, the unshaven capitalist became a popular stereotype of Chinese socialist caricature in the 1930s.

Intelligence

The credibility of craniology, or the study of the shape and size of the skull, encountered a fatal blow when Franz Boas demonstrated in 1908 that headshape is influenced as much by diet and upbringing as by genetics. His discovery could only undermine one of the goals of physical anthropology at the time, namely racial classification, and his work was burnt by the Nazis a few decades later.

The study of skulls played only a minor role in racial discourse in republican China. Wu Dingliang was a rare exception. As director of the Institute of Physical Anthropology, he had obtained 358 skulls from a public graveyard outside Kunming during the Second World War and was struck by the high proportion of metopism, a cranial anomaly consisting of a separation of the two lateral halves of the frontal bone. Wu noted that metopism was generally attributed to a greater development of the frontal lobe and was sometimes associated with racial superiority. He compared his findings with cases occurring among other 'races' and found that all had inferior rates. He concluded that the Chinese were 'at least as superior as the Europeans'.[33]

But rare were those who, like Wu Dingliang or Zhang Liyuan, believed in a link between intelligence and cranial capacity.[34] Most authors mentioned cranial measurements but questioned their accuracy. Zhang Junjun had a slightly different take on the issue. He accepted the idea that cranial capacity could be measured, but doubted the idea propounded by some Europeans that the Chinese brain weighed slightly less than that of the average Caucasian. Zhang did not think that such small differences were sufficient to establish the inferiority of the 'Chinese race'. He correlated the weights of body and brain to obtain a figure indicative of the relative brain capacity of different 'races': 'The average body weight of our race is less compared to that of the Europeans, but the cranial weight, by contrast, is almost the same, so the relative cranial weight of our people is superior to

that of the Europeans. Thus one can deduce that the cranial coefficient of the Chinese race is very high, and one may conclude that the development of our race's cranial strength is not inferior to that of any other race!'[35]

Zhang Junjun also challenged IQ tests current at the time. He contended, rather sensibly, that most tests like Goddard Binet, Stanford Binet and Army Beta were biased. The number of tested specimens was too small, a significant variation in age appeared in interracial comparisons, and the tests failed to take cultural differences into account. He relied instead on the work of his colleagues. Lu Zhiwei, a noted linguist and psychologist who had graduated from Columbia University, had demonstrated by means of the Binet and Pintner-Paterson Performance tests that Chinese children were as intelligent as their American counterparts.[36] But this did not lead Zhang Junjun to dismiss racial categorisations altogether. Instead, he concluded that the 'Chinese race' belonged to the 'superior category'.

Tong Runzhi, a respected specialist in education and the president of Jiangsu Provincial College of Education, also expressed concern about the intelligence of the 'Chinese race' in the prestigious *Eastern Miscellany*. He noted how Westerners scorned the Chinese, called them 'yellow dogs' and proscribed intermarriage: but were they really as inferior as other races? His review of various IQ tests revealed the low scores of 'blacks' and 'reds'. Tong fully endorsed the results, ascribing a 'feeble intelligence' to those 'races'. But the achievements of Chinese children were rarely inferior to those of Americans, except when tests did not take into account their cultural background. Moreover, Tong noted, most IQ tests were based on immigrants, whose intellectual capacity did not reflect the vast potential of the Chinese mind. Tong proposed the spread of education and the implementation of eugenic policies in order to exploit the hidden resources of the Chinese intellect.[37]

Not all scientists indulged in detailed comparative studies. Was not the superiority of Chinese civilisation the result of a unique intelligence? For Chen Jianshan, a marine biologist who wrote popular textbooks on evolution, the ordinary European brain was simply smaller than the Chinese.[38] Chen Yucang, director of the Medicial College at Tongji University and a secretary to the Legislative Yuan, boldly postulated in his *Research on the Human Body* that the degree of civilisation was the only indicator of cranial weight: 'If we compare the cranial weights of different

people, the civilised are somewhat heavier than the savages, and the Chinese brain is a bit heavier than the European's.'[39] Jiang Xiangqing, head of physical education at Fudan University, related civilisation to height and intelligence in a popular introduction to the 'science of body measurements' for athletes. Savages were on the whole smaller than civilised people. Chinese and Japanese were relatively taller than Europeans. Jiang concluded that 'the dumber (*yu*), the smaller'.[40]

Lin Yutang, China's crusader for racial rehabilitation, thought that his people's only fault was that they suffered from 'an overdose of intelligence'. Unlike most of his contemporaries, he did not believe that intelligence was confined to the educated elite: 'One rarely sees in the slums and factory districts that type of big, husky animal of a similar class in the West, distinguished only by his big jaw, low forehead, and brute strength. One meets a different type, with intelligent eyes and cheerful appearance and an eminently reasonable temperament.'[41]

Stereotypes

Early anthropology in Europe was fixated on the link between Africans and apes, legitimised by comparative studies that had begun with Peter Camper in the 1770s. For Sir William Lawrence, a major figure of British racial science, 'the Negro structure approximates unequivocally to that of the monkey. It not only differs from the Caucasian model; but is distinguished from it in two respects; the intellectual characters are reduced, the animal features enlarged and exaggerated.'[42] Such ideas, underneath a thin veneer of science, reproduced in a different guise an age-old prejudice. Despite the Christian doctrine of humanity's unique nature, analogies between humans and animals had existed for centuries. Popular mythology blurred the boundary between them. According to Keith Thomas, the early modern period abounded with half-human, half-animal 'missing links'. 'It was also believed that offspring could be engendered by sexual unions between man and beast.'[43]

In contrast to racial thinkers in Europe and the United States, writers in China rarely made analogies between humans and apes. But they did not hesitate to point out that Africans were at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Since ancient times in China, blackness was the mark of the slave, a belief that could still be found at university level in the 1920s.

Gu Shoubai, a popular writer with the Commercial Press, for instance divided Africans into a 'black slave race' (*heinu zhongzu*), a 'little black slave race' (*xiao heinu zhongzu*) and a 'standard black slave race' (*zhun heinu zhongzu*) in his popular introductions to human geography.[44] Professor Gong Tingzhang reproduced a picture of an African in suit and tie: the caption read 'black slave from Africa'.[45] Gong further remarked that Africans and Australian aborigines had 'small brains' and had attained the level of civilisation of 'dumb peasants' (*yunong*) in China.

Nonetheless, several authors pointed to the similarities between apes and Africans. Chen Jianshan, the popular evolutionist, classified the 'black slave' with the chimpanzees, gorillas and Australians as a branch of the propithecantropus.[46] A popular zoology textbook first published in 1916 included a paragraph on the differences between humans and hominoids. The 'inferior races' (*liedeng zhongzu*) had a facial index similar to that of the orang-utan. Polygenism accounted for the inequality of mankind. The 'black slave' was classified in the gorilla branch, and Malays were descendants of the orang-utan.[47]

Traditional stereotypes about foreign people found their way into textbooks and studies written in the guise of science. *Anthropology*, one of the earliest anthropological treatises to be published in China and still bound in the traditional manner, described the Burmese as lazy, the Thai as cowards and the Vietnamese as frivolous and dishonest.[48] Gu Shoubai, mentioned above, replicated traditional barbarian imagery well into the 1920s. His books were inexpensive and widely distributed by the Commercial Press. Africans were 'racially inferior', and only the aborigines of Australia and South America could be 'more barbarous'. Abyssinians ate meat from living horses, Australian aborigines were cannibals, Taiwanese barbarians went about decapitating people 'when they are idle' (Gu distinguished between 'raw barbarians' and 'cooked barbarians'), and Malays existed on mud and human flesh.[49]

The *Great Dictionary of Zoology* (1923), the first reference work of its kind, analysed human races according to their hair type. The 'woolly-haired' had 'a rather long head, many protruding teeth, and a quite low forehead, so that their face is inclined towards the back. This type of people have a shameful and inferior way of thinking, and have no capacity to shine in history.' Australian aborigines were 'the most inferior race on earth'.[50]

Liu Huru, in his widely-used treatise on human geography, published in 1931 as part of the New Age Historical and Geographical Series, proclaimed that most Africans 'like to sing and dance and love ornaments'. Their customs, however, were judged 'low and ugly', and their character 'ferocious'. In New Guinea and Australia, aborigines had a 'vulgar and low intelligence' and ate grass and insects.[51]

Not even Japan, a close neighbour, was immune to racial stereotyping. When they were not referred to as 'dwarf slaves', their size was ridiculed: Zhou Qichang called these 'yellow or darkish' people a 'race of tiny men' (*airenzhong*).[52] The early treatise *Anthropology* mentioned above divided the Japanese into a 'beautiful race' and an 'ugly race', the latter characterised by a 'fat body, large and square heads, protruding cheeks, slant eyes, a flat nose and a big mouth'.[53]

It would be wrong to assume that these cliches have been gathered here simply by sieving the new print culture of republican China through a filter that retains racial imagery. A dredger would be needed to gather up all the stereotypes which abounded in China, and, needless to say, in the West, during the period between the two world wars and well beyond. These stereotypes were pervasive and influential, and they were rarely challenged.

Hierarchy

Racial discourse was first and foremost about human categorisation. As the language of science on which racial theories were premised evolved, from the appearance of genetics to the decline of craniology, so did the various categorisations devised by racial thinkers. But the fivefold system elaborated by the reformers at the end of the nineteenth century remained remarkably stable in republican China. A few writers invoked Blumenbach, the German anthropologist who first proposed that the human species consisted of five distinct 'races'. The *Great Dictionary of Zoology* introduced the work of Daniel G. Brinton, an American ethnologist who associated five 'races' with five continents.[54] Zhou Qichang also retained Brinton's fivefold scheme after reviewing alternative classificatory models.[55] But reformers and revolutionaries had classified races by five continents well before the work of Brinton was ever introduced to China. Professor Zhu Xi mentioned Huxley's division into Negroid, Australoid, Mongoloid, Xantochroid and Melanochroid 'races', a system similar to that

of the reformers.[56] More popular publications also classified humanity into five races. *Riyong baike quanshu*, or daily encyclopedias, were a direct continuation of the *riyong leishu* evoked in Chapter 2. An early encyclopedia of 1919 divided mankind into a yellow, white, black, red and 'kite' (*yuan*) race,[57] the latter being a popular term for a skin colour ranging from dark brown to light black.

Li Xuezeng's treatise on *Racial Geography in Asia* deserves special mention, since it highlights how traditional imagery continued to play a role in the racial theories developed by scientists even after the Second World War. Li placed Asia at the centre of a chart that represented the origins of 'human races'. The centre was occupied by the 'Mongoloids'. The first concentric circle remained empty, the second circle was assigned to the Nordics, the third to a 'tribe' from the Canary Islands, the fourth to the 'Negroids'. Three more circles followed, dedicated respectively to the 'Australoids', the Negrillos and Neanderthal man.[58] Li's chart bore a striking resemblance to the cosmological plan of the *Tribute of Yu*, which, as we saw in the first chapter, had divided the world into five concentric circles more than two thousand years earlier.

Racial categorisation in the republican era was not confined to the writings of a scholarly elite. As soon as the imperial examination system was abolished in 1905, textbooks purporting to introduce the young reader to world geography and 'human races' appeared. One of the first, compiled in 1907 from Japanese sources, had a chapter dedicated to the human species. A paragraph entitled 'Each Race's Superiority or Inferiority and its Future' correlated skin colour to cultural development. The 'most superior white race', the young reader was told, dominated the world, but the Chinese were the elect of nature, chosen to replace them in the future.[59] The textbook even provided illustrations of the most 'characteristic races'. The original Japanese version, however, displayed a narrow-headed, flat-nosed, dreary Manchu for the 'Chinese race' (see illus. 2). The picture was judged offensive by the editors, who glued a sticker showing a noble Confucian scholar over the original in every copy.[60]

After the foundation of the Republic of China in 1912, readings on racial hierarchy became part of the curriculum in many schools. The opening sentence of a chapter on 'human races' in a 1920 textbook for middle schools declared that 'among the world's races, there are strong and weak

constitutions, there are black and white skins, there is hard and soft hair, there are superior and inferior cultures. A rapid overview shows that they are not of the same level.' Among the five races, the young student was told, the 'whites' were the most powerful, but the 'yellows' were the most fertile, spreading gradually to all five continents.[61]

Even at primary school, children were introduced to racial categorisation:

> Mankind is divided into five races. The yellow and white races are relatively strong and intelligent. Because the other races are feeble and stupid, they are being exterminated by the white race. Only the yellow race competes with the white race. This is so-called evolution… Among the contemporary races that could be called superior, there are only the yellow and the white races. China is [i.e. belongs to] the yellow race.[62]

Another schoolbook, *Essentials of World Geography*, inculcated notions of a 'white race' against which the 'four coloured races' had to fight.[63] Poems on racial self-determination were read daily, calling for national unity and help for the 'weak and backward races'.[64]

Armageddon

What many writers contested was neither the notion of 'race' per se nor even the practice of racial categorisation, but discrimination against the elite. 'In Shanghai many of the most mediocre Englishmen despise noble-minded, erudite scholars. They believe that a race with a yellow skin and straight hair is categorically not of their kind and can definitely not surpass their level of superiority!,'[65] exclaimed the ethnologist Wu Zelin, a University of Wisconsin graduate. Widespread resentment against racial prejudice abroad, in particular the Exclusion Act in the United States which was only abolised in 1943, fuelled complex and contradictory feelings in some scholars. As Frederick Hung, a professor of geography who had a brilliant career in Canada ahead of him, put it:

> Most of the [Chinese] people, however, continue to think of our race as inherently superior to that of our neighbors of lighter or darker skin. Indeed there is very often a set of superiority and inferiority complexes stirring within those who have constant or occasional contacts with foreigners. He constantly persuades himself of his unexplainable superiority over the foreigner, but frequently has to rationalize in order to disperse the inferiority complex.[66]

Professor Lu Xinqiu, a noted biologist and author of a book on human genetics, denounced these feelings of inferiority: 'Naturally we cannot

categorically state that the Chinese have a long history and civilisation and that they are the most superior race of mankind, but it is not necessary to lower oneself.' He reassured the reader: 'From a scientific point of view, the constitution of our body also has many superior points.'[67] Another writer vouched that 'the Chinese are not an inferior race. The intellectual and physical strength of the Chinese people are not inferior to that of other races […] We should resolutely not be too proud, but we need not have an inferiority complex and despise our own creative ability.'[68]

Other writers were more belligerent and interpreted global politics in terms of racial warfare. Tao Menghe, a professor at Beijing National University and future director of the Institute of Social Science, produced tabulations on the expansion of the 'white race' over the five continents. The whites, 'eternal rulers of all races', ruthlessly destroyed the feeble and weak in the course of their conquest of the world. Tao Menghe believed that a new era in racial warfare had begun with the Abyssinian defeat of the Italian army in 1896: 'This is only the first thunderclap of the coloured races' attack on the white race.'[69] The biggest blow was the Japanese victory over the Russians in 1905. Professors Wu Zelin and Ye Shaochun, on the other hand, compiled statistics and tables on the comparative growth of the 'human races'. The future looked bleak: 'The Caucasian race expands every day, the coloured races will decline. If we look at the future, we actually cannot but shudder and fear.' The whites were 'the turtle-dove occupying the magpie's nest'.[70]

A few even invisaged a racial armageddon, among them Zhou Qichang: 'Readers, do you understand the key to the problem? The crux of the matter is not struggle between states, but struggle between races! Have not the other three races already lost in the battle?'[71] Military vocabulary undergirded an aggressive discourse. Hu Huanyong, in a textbook published as part of a Youth Elementary Knowledge Series, claimed that the Chinese had 'the longest history, the highest culture, the largest population, a great and proud country', and were now 'reinforced' by Japan and Turkey, 'two yellow upcoming youngsters'. Together they would fight against the whites, whose 'main camp' was situated in Europe.[72] A popular *ABC of Human Geography* deconstructed the white race as follows: 'Latins are the advance forces, Teutons are the central army, Slavs are the rearguard.'[73] Others described Asia as the 'great barracks of the yellow race'.[74] Such

phraseology was not without affinity to contemporary militant black writings. Marcus Garvey and W. E. B. Du Bois, for instance, considered African Americans to be the 'advance guard of the black race' in its historic struggle against the 'whites'.[75]

Some of these belligerent feelings were no doubt fuelled by exposure to racial discrimination abroad, which often strengthened rather than weakened belief in the existence of a racial hierarchy. In a few cases a feeling of deep alienation abroad led directly to feelings of superiority about the homeland, a trait which found expression in the poet Wen Yiduo.[76] Wen sailed for the United States in 1922, but even on board ship his courage ebbed away as he became increasingly apprehensive of racial discrimination abroad. In America he felt lonely and homesick: he described himself as the 'Exiled Prisoner'. 'Homesickness led him to over-idealize his country and prejudiced him against anything non-Chinese,' notes his biographer.[77] Wen wrote home: 'For a thoughtful young Chinese, the taste of life here in America is beyond description. When I return home for New Year, the year after next, I shall talk with you around the fire, I shall weep bitterly and shed tears to give vent to all the accumulated indignation. I have a nation, I have a history and a culture of five thousand years: how can this be inferior to the Americans?'[78] His resentment against the West cumulated in a poem entitled 'I am Chinese':

I am Chinese, I am Chinese,
I am the divine blood of the Yellow Emperor,
I came from the highest place in the world,
Pamir is my ancestral place,
My race is like the Yellow River,
We flow down the Kunlun mountain slope,
We flow across the Asian continent,
From us have flown exquisite customs.
Mighty nation! Mighty nation![79]

Fantasies of racial revenge led a few writers to seek salvation in Pan-Asianism, even after the Treaty of Versailles at the end of the First World War transferred the German concessions in Shandong to Japan instead of restoring Chinese sovereignty over the area. This trend did not abate in the 1930s, as Japan occupied ever larger parts of China, starting with Manchuria. 'Its writers', recounts the famous author Lu Xun, 'after studying the colour of different peoples, decided that those of the same

colour should take concerted action: the yellow-skinned proletariat ought not to fight the yellow-skinned bourgeoisie but the white proletariat instead. And they took Genghis Khan as their model, describing how his grandson Batu Khan led yellow hordes into Russia to destroy its civilisation, enslaving its nobles and common people alike.'[80]

Morbid visions of racial revenge were projected upon the figure of Batu Khan, magnified as the historical leader of the yellow race in the destruction of Western civilisation. An extract from Huang Zhenxia's 160-page poem 'Blood of the Yellow Race' is representative of this type of literature:

Hide, frightened European dogs!
Topple, Muscovite imposing high buildings!
Roll, Caucasian yellow-haired heads!
Fearful, the oil oozing from burning corpses,
The horror of putrid bodies strewing the ground;
The God of Death seizes white girls in frenzied embrace,
Beauties are turned into fearsome skeletons;
Cannibals struggle like beasts in ancient palaces;
A foul stench wafts from coffins a thousand years old;
There is sorrow on the faces of the Crusaders;
Iron hooves trample broken bones,
Camels utter wild howls;
God has fled; vengeful devils have raised the scourge of fire.
The Yellow Peril is here! The Yellow Peril!
Asian warriors' bloody maws are devouring men.[81]

There were many calmer voices, but even those who favoured cooperation with the West seemed adamant that racial hierarchy was a basic fact of nature—even when they were confronted with extensive evidence to the contrary. One example is Pan Guangdan, a highly distinguished sociologist whose work on eugenics will be considered in the next chapter. Pan enrolled at Dartmouth College in 1922 to study zoology and two years later went on to Columbia University to read for a master's degree in palaeontology and genetics. In a review of *The American Negro*, edited by Donald Young in 1928, Pan Guangdan expressed his disappointment in the contributors' unwillingness to speak in terms of racial inequality:

But to be true to observable facts, in any given period of time sufficiently long for selection to take effect, races *as groups are* different, unequal, and there is no reason except one based upon sentiment why we cannot refer to them in terms of inferiority and superiority, when facts warrant us. It is to be suspected that the Jewish scholars, themselves belonging to a racial group which has long been

unjustly discriminated against, have unwittingly developed among themselves a defensive mechanism which is influencing their judgements on racial questions. The reviewer recalls with regret that during his student days [in the United States] he had estranged some of his best Jewish friends for his candid views on the point of racial inequality.[82]

On the other hand, intellectuals who were steeped in racial thinking at home sometimes substantially changed their ideas when studying abroad. Fei Xiaotong, for example, read anthropology at Qinghua University under Pan Guangdan and Chen Da, two sociologists who firmly believed in racial hierarchy. Fei soon became interested in anthropometry: armed with calipers and anthropometers, he roved the capital's prisons in search of the biological measure of crime. It was only after having studied under Bronislaw Malinowski at the London School of Economics in 1936 that he abandoned anthropometry and went on to write several classic studies of the Chinese countryside.[83]

There were others, besides Fei Xiaotong, who had their doubts about the validity of racial theories. A few intellectuals even openly denied the existence of different 'races' in the human species. Zhang Junmai, a prominent philosopher and political figure who had accompanied Liang Qichao on his tour of Europe, wisely excluded 'common blood' from his definition of the nation. The Han, he noted, had intermarried with so many different people since the Tang dynasty that they had lost their 'racial purity'.[84] The historian Qi Sihe criticised the use of racial theories in China, and pointed out how 'race' was a declining notion in the modern world.[85]

But these were isolated voices. Racial discourse became pervasive in the republican era and cut across most political positions, from the fascist core of the Guomindang to the communist theories of Li Dazhao.[86] Its powerful appeal to a sense of belonging based on presumed links of blood, its authoritative worldview in which cultural differences could be explained in terms of stable biological laws, its seemingly objective nature buttressed by the language of science, all these aspects endowed racial discourse with singular resilience.

6

RACE AS SEED (1915–1949)

Background

Eugenics comes from a combination of the Greek words for ‘good’ and ‘generation’.[1] Proponents of eugenics believed that the biological qualities of the human species as a whole or a population group in particular could be improved by a variety of methods. Advocates of ‘positive eugenics’, a term coined by Francis Galton (1822–1911), hoped to ensure that individuals with beneficial traits would reproduce at a higher rate than the rest of the population. ‘Negative eugenics’ aimed to restrict the reproduction of people with less desirable features. In extreme cases, those defined as suffering from particularly severe disabilities were singled out for segregation, sterilisation or even euthanasia. Eugenics reached its greatest popularity between the two World Wars, when governments around the world promoted eugenic policies, supported by medical institutions and influential thinkers as varied as Winston Churchill, H. G. Wells, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, Theodore Roosevelt and Linus Pauling. The most infamous example is Nazi Germany, where groups as diverse as the blind, the mentally ill, the deaf, homosexuals and promiscuous women were defined as ‘unfit’. Entire categories of people, including the Roma and Jews, were targeted for mass murder.

Although eugenics never achieved a significant degree of institutional organisation in republican China, ideas about race improvement were widespread and pervasive. Some of these ideas predated Charles Darwin and his cousin Francis Galton. Already by the Song dynasty, China had developed a sophisticated body of knowledge about selection and breeding, in particular in botany. Wang Guan wrote about peonies during the tenth century: ‘Herbaceous peonies grow with the breath of Heaven and Earth. Their size and colour can be controlled by changing their nature, born of

Heaven and Earth, so that rare shapes and colours are produced in our human world.'[2] Natural variations and their use to cross-breed new varieties through artificial selection were well understood.

The use of selective breeding was also common with goldfish. The *Illustrated Book on Goldfish*, dated 1848, explained that 'in choosing fish for mating, select a male of excellent variety that complements the female in colour, type and size.'

On the other hand, traditional medicine focused on reproductive health well before the appearance of eugenics. Medical writers in late imperial China interpreted conception as the union of male semen and female blood and directly attributed the innate abilities of offspring to the quality of their parents. A child conceived with thin blood or weak seed could cause a broken skull, retardation, a soft neck, weak limbs, uneven teeth, difficulties in mobility, discolouration of the hair and other defects, according to one sixteenth-century medical practitioner.[3]

In a number of rice-growing societies, including China, there is a semantic isomorphism between 'seed' (*zhong*) and 'race' (*zhong, zhongzu*), which stands in contrast to the vocabulary of animal breeding that was behind early notions of eugenics in Europe.[4] The male bestowed, the female received, much as the seed was planted on fertile soil. Metaphors taken from rice cultivation supported a protean vision of human conception in which the quality of offspring could be nurtured and improved at every stage. The selection of seed, the preparation of soil, the use of fertilisers, even the elimination of sickly seedlings were common practices in agriculture, and these found an echo in medical descriptions of human reproduction. 'One can hardly expect rice and wheat to grow on gravel: how could one hope that a women of poor blessings would bear a son?', wondered one scholar.[5] Gestation was understood as a malleable process which could be positively influenced from the moment of conception to the point of delivery. The timing of intercourse, the regulation of emotions, the supervision of a pregnant woman's diet were all seen as important factors which could contribute to the health of the foetus. Menstrual blood was thought to nourish the foetus. After birth, it was transformed into breast milk, which was believed to transmit the moral and physical qualities of the mother.[6]

Medical publications in the late imperial period presented human reproduction as a potentially dangerous process that should be carefully regulated in order to safeguard the lineage's future. A progenitor was seen as a key element in a patrilineal line of descent, an indispensable link connecting past ancestors and future descendants, and both men and women were enjoined to regulate and administer their reproductive behaviour for the sake of their offspring.

Traditional medicine demanded that great attention be paid to diet, emotions and even gestures, all of which had an impact on foetal health. A child conceived by inebriated parents was marked by mental retardation: 'Scholars and government officials in the Jiangnan region often wallow in women and song. When taking a wife or concubine, they search for young and pretty ones, although the children they conceive are all weak and disease-ridden, dying at an early age. These gentlemen even enter the bedroom completely drunk, with their minds dazed and confused, hence their offspring are slow-witted.'[7]

A concern for moderation was even more vital for pregnant women, whose bodies lived in close affinity with the environment. Diet was crucial, and symbolic meanings were assigned to certain types of food, weaving a close network of correlations between macrocosm and microcosm. Eating rabbit meat could cause a hare-lip in the new-born baby, while food contained sheep's blood could lead to albino eyes. Many health manuals extended their dietary restrictions to crabs, tortoises, sparrows and shellfish, as well as spices like ginger, pepper and garlic: beyond its heating properties, ginger could cause polydactylia in the foetus. According to one nineteenth-century manual, weird combinations of food, such as eel with frog, could lead to a variety of strange deformities in the foetus.[8]

Pregnant women were seen to be capable of releasing violent passions and fits of anger that could bring about a physical lesion. Excessive joy caused damage to the heart, anger harmed the liver, while fear destroyed the kidney: physical retribution followed every form of emotional excess. The consequences of these emotions were portrayed in stark medical terms, as the child could be born 'blind, deaf and mute, retarded and epileptic'.[9] Some medical writers also believed that the very shape of the foetus underwent change according to the objects seen by the mother, who should avoid looking at ugly and deformed people. The influential medical expert Wan Quan, for instance, observed how women who often watched puppet

theatre and monkey shows during pregnancy later gave birth to children with simian features. On the other hand, a pregnant mother who listened to words of wisdom or to scholarly texts being read aloud had a greater chance of conceiving a son.[10]

Most of these medical texts were concerned about the production of healthy offspring for the lineage, but in late imperial China a few scholars also established a more general link between the health of the individual and the state of the country. The seventeenth-century philosopher Yan Yuan (1635–1704), for instance, commented how 'An active body is a strong body, an active home is a strong home, an active country is a strong country'.[11] Xu Guangqi (Paul Xu, 1562–1633), a leading Christian convert who collaborated with Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), developed a theory of birthrates (*shengren zhi lü*) at the beginning of the seventeenth century: 'The law of birth of people is that generally they double every thirty years.'[12] Hong Liangji (1746–1809) took these observations further and wrote about the danger of overpopulation five years before Thomas Malthus' *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798).[13]

The 'peril of overpopulation' (*renman zhi huan*) became a cause for concern in the course of the nineteenth century. Tang Peng (1801–44), a scholar-official from Hunan province, devoted much attention to the problem of vagrancy in his *Fu Qiuzi*, and identified overpopulation as a major cause of the empire's decline.[14] Xu Naiji (1777–1839), a high official in Beijing who was against opium prohibition, suggested that in view of the demographic pressure, it was unnecessary to feel concerned for addicts, described as being no more than 'vagrants, lazy, without ambition or old'.[15] Starting with Gong Zizhen (1792–1841), a growing number of prominent scholars commented on the alarming increase in population,[16] although most conservative scholars continued to believe that the country should be densely populated in order to achieve wealth and power. Xu Zi (1801–1862), for instance, blamed economic decline on the circulation of silver money, explicitly denying the existence of demographic pressure.[17]

But the most astonishing vision of state control over people's reproduction was expressed in the privacy of a secret journal by Wang Shiduo (1802–89), preceptor of the Imperial Academy and adviser to the governor of Hubei province.[18] Here he outlined a theory of state power based on the limitation of births and the regulation of sexuality. In this

journal which he wrote during the turbulent years of the Taiping rebellion (1850–64) he observed: ‘There are too many women, hence there are too many people; because there are too many people, they are poor and there is not enough available land to support them.’ Distressed by the growing number of paupers, he proclaimed: ‘Heaven has its material for slaughter. Among animals they are the sheep, the pigs, the chickens and the ducks; among humans they are the short and puny, ugly, mean-eyed, short-stepped, garrulous, effeminate and stupid people.’[19] Wang confided to his journal that taxes should be imposed on the female population to implement a thorough infanticide policy: all female children born of poor parents and sons who were physically abnormal or did not have handsome features should be drowned; temples, nunneries, ‘institutes for virgin women’ and ‘halls of chastity’ should be constructed in large numbers; people should be encouraged to become monks or nuns or remain unmarried; and women with one living child should be compelled to take abortifacient drugs to terminate their pregnancies. Wang Shiduo was certainly a marginal thinker, but his writings reflected a mounting interest in demographic issues which surfaced in the writings of other nineteenth-century scholars.

Concern over human reproduction and its effects on the strength of the state culminated in the reform movement in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In formulating their racial theories, a number of reformers directly referred to eugenics. Tan Sitong, for instance, mentioned the ‘science of race advancement’ in his *Study of Humanity* (*Renxue*):

> Nowadays, electricity is able to transmit heat and power without a wire and to take a photograph of the liver and lungs. It can also test the material activity of the brain: in the course of time, it will be possible to eliminate its heavy nature and preserve its lightness, to decrease the body and increase the mind. If we also pay attention to the science of race advancement [*jinzhong zhi xue*], each generation will be superior to the other; through endless transformations, it will give birth to another race, which uses solely its intelligence and not its strength, having only a spirit and no body.[20]

Tan Sitong, like the other reformers, was still steeped in a world of traditional learning, and despite many references to foreign thinkers he viewed the issue of ‘race advancement’ from the point of view of his own cosmological philosophy, which was based mainly on Confucian and Daoist teachings. Eugenics, from Tan’s perspective, was but a means to realise an ideal spiritual wholeness. Controlling the evolution of the ‘race’ would permit the body to be dissolved and the mind to be transcended, finally achieving spiritual unity with the cosmos.

Kang Youwei's ideas about eugenics were part of his utopian philosophy of the One World, examined in Chapter 3. The 'amelioration of the race' was an intrinsic part of his ideal society. Kang suggested that women with desirable traits be selected to be impregnated in a Foetal Education Institute (*taijiaoyuan*) for the propagation of the species. Qualified doctors would prescribe their diet and supervise their activities, nurses would take care of the delivery, census officers would record new births, and the population office would name successfully selected infants, who would be placed in special institutions. The disabled and the mentally deficient would be sterilised.[21]

Yan Fu, on the other hand, proposed a ban on early marriage, referring to the wretched conditions in which the poor had to live: 'Children feed on coarse food and live in filthy places; they are not properly educated, growing up amid disease and distress: the body becomes weak and the mind turns muddled. When they grow up, lust appears but intelligence stays dormant; they are anxious to take a wife, thereby spreading the wrong seed [*zhong*, 'race'] from one generation to the next.'[22] Liang Qichao also expressed his concern about the proliferation of unhealthy elements in China, proclaiming his admiration for the Spartans, who used to cast out babies considered unfit.[23]

Eugenics also caught the attention of some revolutionaries. Zhang Binglin boldly claimed that 'the superiority or inferiority inherent in heredity is responsible for intelligence or stupidity; the purity or impurity of the blood is responsible for strength or weakness.' He believed that people with undesirable features could be improved by interbreeding with a 'superior strain' of blood: 'After eight generations, the inferior blood will be no more than 1/128th, which corresponds almost to a superior race.'[24]

Expansion

Interest in eugenics exploded with the New Culture Movement. Professor Chen Yinghuang, author of one of the first anthropological textbooks in China, briefly mentioned how eugenics was a science capable of improving society by expelling its diseased elements, a process he called *renzhong gailiang*, 'improvement of the race', or *youshengxue*, 'science of superior birth'.[25] The term *youshengxue* would rapidly become mainstream. It resonated with evolutionary views of the world as an arena of struggle

between races, bringing to mind the expression 'struggle for survival' (*yousheng liebai*, literally 'the superior win, the inferior lose'). It was homophonous with 'science of how the superior win'.

A further call for racial improvement appeared in the journal *New Education* in 1919. Xia Yuzhong, the editor of Beijing Normal University's textbooks and a professor of Chinese literature, deplored the fact that modern civilisation, despite all its material progress, was marred by a proliferation of unfit elements. 'Society is still crammed with all the evil, the ugly, the false, the wicked, the scrambling, the base, the stupid, the brutish and the vexing elements of the human race, filled with all the bad phenomena that could lead a superior person to commit suicide.' Medical experts, Xia recommended, should strictly distinguish between healthy individuals to be preserved and unfit elements to be eliminated. Each province should have a specialised eugenics laboratory, while breeding villages should be established for people with perfect brains and ideal bodies in order to generate the future 'model race'.[26]

Articles introducing a broad readership to the Eugenics Laboratory of Sir Francis Galton, the Eugenics Education Society of Leonard Darwin and the work of American eugenists such as Charles Davenport soon followed.[27] One of the first comprehensive treatises on eugenics written for the general reader appeared in 1923. The slim volume was coauthored by Zhou Jianren, the science editor of the Commercial Press in Shanghai and brother of Lu Xun, and Chen Changheng, a specialist in demography.[28]

Evolution and Eugenics rapidly became a best-seller. The authors started by pointing out that progress in human societies had always been hampered by racial degeneration. Great civilisations such as Babylon, Greece, Rome, Spain and Turkey had collapsed as a consequence of racial decrepitude, and China, they warned, would soon go the same way. Eugenics would empower the state to direct the course of social evolution. Following the reformers, Chen harped on the theme of racial extinction. He described how Western countries were actively engaged in eugenic policies and how they had succeeded in progressively raising the vitality of the 'race'. Whereas the 'races' of the West were becoming increasingly strong and vibrant, 'national subjugation and racial extinction' (*wangguomiezhong*, a concise and frequently used epigram) were thought to pose a threat to a Middle Kingdom in decay.[29]

Zhou Jianren explained the principles of evolution and the mechanisms of heredity. Statistics proved that not only physical characteristics, but also mental traits could be inherited: parents suffering from low intelligence could not produce bright children.[30] As was explained in Chapter 4, belief in the inheritance of mental characteristics was essentially non-Darwinian, and was related to the Lamarckian paradigm of unilinear evolution. But belief in biological determinism gained further influence with the rediscovery of hereditary principles by Mendel at the turn of the century. 'Science' demonstrated how one's character was determined by Mendelian factors. The Mendelian revolution, by claiming that nature could not be overcome by nurture, led to the belief that the spread of unfit characters should be prevented for the sake of 'progress'.

In republican China, many popular writers exploited the Mendelian idea that genetic factors determined the character of an individual. Zhou Jianren asserted that the proliferation of 'unfit' elements drained the race's resources and endangered society. He went on to advocate the speedy limitation of their reproduction: 'If one wants to restrict the reproduction of the unfit, one can only segregate them. An active method would be to attempt to remove their reproductive capacity, and only after that can they be released.'[31]

Historians of medicine have demonstrated the existence of a close link between eugenic theories and Mendelian genetics, in particular in countries like England and Germany. Neo-Lamarckian approaches to inheritance, however, were not incompatible with eugenic discourse, as is clearly reflected in the case of Russia and Brazil, two countries which also harboured strident advocates of eugenic sterilisation.[32] Proponents of neo-Lamarckism claimed that undesirable characteristics like alcoholism were acquired in one generation and passed on to the next: the belief in the inheritance of acquired features did not need to be based on a genealogical analysis to demonstrate that a trait followed Mendelian laws. Environmental determinism, rather than biological determinism, was used to advocate the sterilisation of particular categories of people. France has been characterised as the 'home of neo-Lamarckian eugenics', an emphasis which is explained partly because of the pronounced concern over the declining birth rate and fears of underpopulation. While eugenists in France did not support Mendelian laws, they still called for the elimination of dysgenic elements, although they generally preferred to encourage the

propagation of the ‘fit’ and the improvement of the health of the ‘unfit’. In contrast to researchers in Germany and Britain, French eugenists did not produce significant biological research or statistical studies. As in China, eugenics was part of the everyday vocabulary of most political groups, from far left to extreme right, as many intellectuals shared a concern over modernity, a sense of nationalism and an expectation that the government would reform society. But in France, widespread reluctance to interfere in the private lives of families, opposition from religious and liberal groups, and a strong sense among family doctors of their professional duty to respect the confidentiality of their patients combined to marginalise eugenic proposals.[33]

Republican China combined Mendelian genetics with neo-Lamarckian approaches to inheritance in a holistic approach which stressed the interdependence of nature with nurture and the subordination of the individual to the nation. Just as the absence of a clear boundary between body and mind characterised medical discourse, few clear distinctions were made between socially undesirable features and genetic disorders.

A year after the appearance of *Evolution and Eugenics*, the Commercial Press published a study of heredity written by Liu Xiong. Like Zhou Jianren, Liu represented the worst current of eugenics. He subscribed to the belief that intellectual capacity was inherited, drew a rigid line between people defined as ‘inferior’ and ‘superior’ and advocated for the restriction of the reproduction of the ‘unfit’. Liu maintained that it was the responsibility of eugenics to eliminate ‘inferior elements’ in order to preserve the race’s superior strain.[34] Two themes of Liu’s work in particular should be noted, since they were popular in other writings on eugenics in republican China.

First, there was the concept of *class*. In Liu Xiong’s view, eugenics should be targeted toward specific classes. The health of the lower classes should be raised in order to dissolve the class system that had prevailed in the past: only then could social harmony be achieved. Intellectuals were defined as a ‘class’ (*jieji*) of their own, opposed to elements ‘without intelligence’ that propagated at the bottom of society. Whereas Chen Changheng’s theories were still dominated by the idea of racial extinction (*baozhong*), in tune with the reformers’ racial thinking, Liu advanced a different vision: the lower classes had to be elevated to the level of the superior class. Racial uniformity within the nation, instead of racial

superiority among nations, would ensure the survival of the country. The focus was shifted from racial differences between nations to racial differences between classes. By shifting the myth of superiority from 'race' to 'class', Liu envisage intellectuals as a privileged genetic group, the repository of racial purity.

Secondly, there was the concept of *individualism*. 'The limit of individual liberty is that it should not infringe upon others and that it should not harm the development of the race.' In the special paragraph that Liu devoted to the interaction of individual and race, it was explained that the freedom of the individual had to be restricted when it threatened the welfare of the race as a whole. The foremost duty of the citizen was to contribute actively to the race: 'When one assumes the task of protecting the race's superior characteristics, one cannot consider only individual liberty and comfort.' The subordination of the individual to the group was a concern that often emerged in eugenic writings, in China and elsewhere.

Until the mid-1920s, however, the idea of race improvement remained confined to a narrow group of intellectuals. It was only with Pan Guangdan (1898–1967) that eugenics would become a household word in China. Although Pan had had one leg amputated after an athletic injury, he was to become China's most popular eugenist.[35]

Pan Guangdan became interested in eugenics as a student at Qinghua University. On graduation from Dartmouth, he and several fellow students founded the first eugenic organisation in China, 'The Chinese Eugenics Institute' (*Zhongguo yousheng xuehui*), which put forward proposals for the enactment of eugenic laws. The following year, Pan wrote an introduction to the international eugenics movement. He described the general principles of eugenics and listed the name, address, date of founding and principal publications of each of the most important institutions.[36] In this early article, Pan called for the 'citizenisation' (*gongminhua*) of the movement, as eugenics could not be considered the responsibility of scientists alone: race improvement was closely related to the politics of the state. The emergence of the nation coalesced with the rise of the race.[37]

Pan also tackled the problem of race improvement in China. In *The Eugenic Question in China*, he described two mutually exclusive processes of selection: natural selection (*tianran xuanze* or *tianze*), which was the evolutionists' object of investigation, and cultural selection (*wenhua xuanze*

or *huaze*), the concern of the eugenists.[38] The spread of foreign culture had interfered dramatically with the process of natural selection in China. The purpose of Pan's short study was to analyse the effects of this new cultural influence on the 'Chinese race'. The first section focused on different aspects of cultural selection in China prior to the country's opening to the West:[39]

(1) Familism (*jiazuzhuyi*), as opposed to Western individualism (*gerenzhuyi*), was viewed as a positive factor in the preservation of the race's vitality. The traditional family stressed the duties of its members more than their rights. 'Individual liberty and happiness have to recede into the background or be sacrificed entirely in the struggle for survival of the race.'
(2) Chinese religions supported healthy marriages. The Confucian emphasis on filial piety and wholesome procreation was compatible with 'racial order' (*zhongzu zhi'an*).
(3) The traditional matrimonial system was compatible with 'racial hygiene' (*zhongzu weisheng*), as the individual's role was effectively minimised to ensure collective harmony. Arranged marriages and low rates of divorce were valued positively by Pan. Even bigamy was not seen to be a negative factor in eugenics, since it was practised only by noble and wealthy families, whose blood was generally seen to be superior to that of ordinary people. Although he admitted that concubinage had a negative influence on racial health, Pan Guangdan judged that traditional Chinese marriage customs were altogether sound.
(4) Population growth had so far remained free from any kind of cultural interference. The reproduction rate was high, but it had always been counterbalanced by a high mortality.
(5) Rural life maintained the race's vitality. The urban style of life only stimulated a decadent individualism that contributed nothing to the race.

Pan concluded that the negative influence of cultural selection had never been significant in China. 'Westernisation', however, had already begun to affect social organisation in a number of ways. First, medical hygiene had wiped out the process of natural selection, allowing inferior people to

proliferate; secondly, modern matrimonial practices emphasised romanticism, advocated a late marriage age, espoused ideals unattainable for many young people and put undue emphasis on the financial independence of the female partner; thirdly, the upper classes, motivated by individualism, tended to limit their offspring; and finally, urbanisation led to the dissemination of deleterious practices throughout the country.[40] Pan Guangdan called for a critical re-evaluation of Western civilisation. Foreign cultural penetration had upset the country's social organisation and undermined its racial health; cultural selection had disturbed a delicate balance that could be redressed only by eugenics.

In this early article, Pan Guangdan had laid out what were to become the dominant themes of his thought, namely faith in the inherent superiority of the intellectual class, distrust of individualism and confidence in the family as the basic unit of the nation-race. Pan spent much of his time teaching and writing on the concepts of eugenics that he had elaborated during this early period. His ideal family, for instance, was conceptualised in *Chinese Family Problems* (1928). This study presented the results of a survey on attitudes towards marriage of readers of the Shanghai newspaper *Current Events*. The introduction equated family with *xuetong*, 'stock', 'breed' or 'strain':[41] this constituted the biological unit of the race. The genetic inheritance of the family should be improved, for only then could it become an 'instrument for struggle and survival'.[42] Pan was opposed to birth control, late marriage and female independence, pointing instead to the positive aspects of the traditional marriage system.

His faith in the racial superiority of intellectuals, shared by many eugenists, was expressed in his work on blood kinship among Chinese stage actors. Inspired by such outdated works as Galton's *Hereditary Genius* (1869) and Havelock Ellis' *A Study of British Genius* (1904), it analysed the clan records of famous acting families in order to demonstrate that the assortative mating intuitively practised by certain families had produced a large number of famous actors. Actor families had succeeded in preserving the desirable genetic qualities: theatrical talent, Pan believed, had been transmitted through the genes.[43]

Apogee

Pan was an outspoken advocate for eugenics and for many years crusaded for its adoption. Together with the Chinese Committee for Racial Hygiene, he initiated the publication of a *Eugenics Monthly*, which contained essays, short stories and reviews.[44] The spread of a eugenic discourse, however, cannot be ascribed to the activity of one scholar. Many intellectuals in the late 1920s were actively engaged in the promotion of racial betterment. Pan's concern with the family converged with the preoccupations of Yi Jiayue, one of the most respected writers on family problems. Yi believed that the family could strengthen the country's 'racial organisation' and was beneficial to the 'struggle for survival'.[45] Popular textbooks on heredity explained the principles of eugenics and the dangers of racial degeneration on the strength of Mendelian genetics.[46] A doctrinaire *ABC of Eugenics* was published in 1929,[47] and an *Introduction to the Science of Race Improvement* in 1932.[48] The *Student's Magazine* urged university students to undertake research in eugenics for the advancement of the race, the state and the individual.[49]

After 1930, the casual use of eugenic arguments became increasingly common in scholarly circles. 'Race improvement' and 'racial hygiene' became the catchwords of the day. Medical journals, for instance, regularly debated issues pertaining to 'racial biology'.[50] In his *Racial Hygiene*, Dr Jin Zizhi explained how the future of the nation was dependent on the physical condition of the race.[51] One eugenist even warned that masturbation would endanger the racial health of the nation.[52]

Eugenic discourse was also pervasive in more popular publications. Marriage guides anticipated that beautiful, superior men and women would marry one another to 'regenerate' the race.[53] An influential manual for women emphasised how the 'superiority' or 'inferiority' of children depended on their parents; it described hereditary diseases as the 'germs of race betterment' which menaced the race with degeneration and final extinction. Physical education was exalted; strength and fitness replaced Confucian values of delicacy and frailty. The profound sense of threat which pervaded republican China led to an obsession with physical prowess and military power. Versions of pastoral also intruded into racial discourse:

rural life was thought to invigorate the individual and maintain biological vitality.[54]

By the mid-1930s, discussions on race improvement began to appear regularly in newspapers. In 1935, the imminent breeding of 'scientific babies' by eugenic methods was heralded in one daily.[55] The same year, eugenic laws were explained in the *Xinwenbao* by Yan Duhe, a popular author of 'mandarin ducks and butterfly' literature.[56] The *Central Daily* devoted two pages to the 'Question of Race Improvement',[57] while the *New China Times* introduced heredity and eugenics to its readers.[58] Pan Guangdan wrote on 'Eugenics and Racial Health' in the *Beijing Morning*,[59] which a month later published a paper analysing the eugenic content of Chinese proverbs[60] and an article urging philanthropists to pay more attention to questions of race improvement.[61]

But not everybody in China believed in the regenerating virtues of eugenics. Most opponents were population specialists. In 1928, a heated debate occurred between Sun Benwen, who had been awarded a PhD at New York University and was professor of sociology at Fudan University, and Pan Guangdan. Sun stood firmly on the side of nurture, refuting Pan's biological determinism.[62] Four arguments emerged from his scathing critique: first, humans were not mere animals; secondly, culture could not be reduced to a mere gene; thirdly, IQ tests were not indicative of inherited intelligence; and fourthly, wealth and position did not reflect one's inherent abilities.[63] Sun found it difficult to gauge 'intelligence', and doubted whether qualities such as 'superiority' and 'inferiority' existed at birth.[64] As eugenics had proved capable only of limiting the so-called 'unfit' elements of society, Sun drily referred to it as a 'science of inferior birth' (*lieshengxue*, as opposed to *youshengxue*, or 'science of superior birth'). Despite his critical attitude, Sun Benwen still professed a belief in the future possibility of breeding people like cattle.[65]

Chen Tianbiao, another expert of demography, judged that nature and nurture played equally important roles, and frowned on the idea of a dominant heredity.[66] Chen was nevertheless eager to subscribe to the idea of a marriage ban between people with contagious diseases, the mentally disturbed, the feeble-minded and the maimed (sic); he also advocated increased eugenic activities in China.[67] Xu Shilian, a specialist in

population theories, contrasted euthenics (*youyexue*), the science of environmental improvement, to eugenics (*youshengxue*).[68] Xu was critical of the scientific basis of eugenics, and disputed the idea that a relationship existed between social position and intellectual capacity.[69] His critique was based mainly on Herbert Jennings' *Biological Basis of Human Nature* (1930), a study that had exposed the fallacies of eugenics.

On the other hand, Chen Da, one of the most respected sociologists of the republican era,[70] drew imperturbably upon Goddard's *Feeblemindedness* and Tredgold's *Mental Deficiency*,[71] the epitome of eugenic bigotry. These works had been discredited in Europe and the United States by a growing body of anti-eugenic research, but were still used by the author to validate his vision of race improvement. Chen Da invited Pan Guangdan to lecture at Qinghua University in eugenics and sociology. Incidentally, both Chen Da and Pan Guangdan were closely related to Liang Qichao, who was also based at Qinghua.

In the West, scholarly attacks on eugenics had proliferated since the First World War. Leading scientists like J. B. S. Haldane, Julian Huxley, Lancelot Hogben and Herbert Jennings turned against eugenics and denounced the race and class prejudice it cultivated. G. K. Chesterton's collection of essays from the early 1920s, *Eugenics and Other Evils*, became a 'staple of the anti-eugenic arsenal on both sides of the Atlantic'.[72] Apart from some isolated specialists active in the social sciences, this trend found few echoes among Chinese scientists. In his *Race improvement* (1936), Yu Jingrang voiced his concern about the declining birth rate of the higher classes, while distancing himself from eugenic policies.[73] It was only in the revised edition of his book published in 1947 that the author publicly denounced Nazi eugenics, sterilisation policies and marriage restrictions on the so-called lower classes.[74]

Only a few authors openly opposed eugenics. Indeed, many gave free rein to class prejudice in expounding the most utopian visions of race improvement. Zhang Junjun's *Reform of the Chinese race*, first published in 1935, was an exercise in race dissection. The original superior Han bloodstream had been submerged by successive strains of worthless barbarian blood; intermarriage and migration had led to the progressive degeneration of the Chinese race. Zhang diagnosed the race's illness by analysing its height, weight, infant mortality, life expectancy, vitality,

feeding patterns and ‘spiritual defects’. When compared to other countries situated between the 20th and 33rd parallels, it appeared that the Chinese were quite superior in intelligence, though not in physical strength.[75] Statistics revealed that at least 50 per cent of the 13,485 students tested were in poor physical shape.[76] To remedy the feebleness of the race, the author prescribed a stable nation with a strong central government.[77] Eugenics was central to the reform of the race: dysgenic marriages had to be proscribed, whereas selective mating with ‘superior elements’ of other ‘races’ should be encouraged.

A ‘Draft for the Implementation of Shenxi’s Race Reform’ was appended to Zhang’s study. It included a plan for an Institute of Race Reform, in which the eugenics department would be responsible for enacting racial laws. It would register and investigate marriages, including family pedigrees, and could be consulted on matrimonial matters. It would reward spiritually and physically ‘healthy’ marriages and otherwise encourage ‘superior births’. Finally, it would be responsible for preventing ‘unhealthy’ marriages. These were defined as unions in which one of the partners was feebleminded, mentally disordered, afflicted with a communicable disease, physically weak, tubercular or ‘criminally inclined’. The department in charge of IQ tests was expected to classify citizens as ‘intelligent’ (*shangzhi*) or ‘stupid’ (*xiayu*), a sharp distinction characteristic of the author’s rigid approach to questions of heredity. The very terminology Zhang applied revealed the direct influence of the classics: ‘superior intelligence’ (*shangzhi*) and inferior stupidity (*xiayu*) cannot be changed,’ or so it was written in the *Analects*.[78]

Zhang Junjun’s list of genetically defective elements matched the worst of Western eugenic theories in vagueness. The term ‘feeble-minded’ (*dineng*) was used indiscriminately for almost any type of learning disability. ‘Mentally disordered’ (*shenjingbing*), a favourite term of abuse to this day, was left undefined, whereas ‘physically weak’ (*shenti xuruo*) was nothing more than a convenient term to apply to any type of person judged deleterious to society. The perception of criminality as a biological flaw reflected the popular belief in the inheritance of behavioural traits: social pathology was rooted in the genes, not in society. In imperial China, families with a psychotic member were often excluded from the marital pool, as society emphasised the hereditary basis of mental disease.[79]

In the West, the gradual reification of the spiritual sphere of life had transformed intelligence into an entity that was thought to be measurable. Belief in the measurement of intelligence was translated into the use of a strict terminology for all the 'levels' of intelligence that researchers were thought to have discerned. Eugenics in republican China, in comparison, remained rather vague. Drawing upon the traditional distinction between the uneducated masses and the cultured elite, the dichotomy between 'stupidity' and 'intelligence' was often sufficient. Those who made the effort to distinguish various levels of intellectual deficiency were rare. Ke Xiangfeng, for instance, classified the 'unfit' into 'morons' (*benzi*), 'imbeciles' (*daizi*) and 'idiots' (*chizi*), each corresponding to a different IQ level. Ke was an exception: he advocated the 'rationalisation' of all population problems, and wanted 'rational' criteria for the classification of 'inferior' elements.[80]

Zhang Junjun championed drastic measures—segregation, exile and castration—to prevent the procreation of people he had so vaguely classified as 'unfit'. Exile was a long-standing traditional means of isolating criminals by sending them to the edges of the empire, far away from the civilised centre. Castration was the cruellest form of sterilisation. The majority of eugenists who eventually came to find virtue in sterilisation prescribed vasectomy, which left the patient sterile but did not affect his sexuality. Zhang's study concluded with extracts from correspondence expressing admiration and support for his eugenic project. Shao Lizi, governor of Shenxi province from 1933–36, endorsed Zhang's 'Draft for the Implementation of Shenxi's Race Reform'. Other enthusiastic supporters included Zhang Xueliang, once the most powerful warlord in the north of China, then deputy commander-in-chief of operations against the communists in the north-west; Pan Gongzhan, an influential journalist and publisher, member of the Central Executive Committee of the Guomindang and future vice-minister of information; Cai Yuanpei, founder and president of the prestigious Academia Sinica; Chen Lifu, head of the organisation department of the Guomindang, and other high-ranking officials. Eugenic ideas were fostered by the Guomindang, whose own New Life Movement was partly inspired by a preoccupation with a 'strong race and a strong nation'.[81]

Pan Guangdan also planned a book on the New Life Movement and eugenics (*Xinshenghuo yu youshengxue*). It never appeared, presumably

because of the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937. The Japanese invasion plunged the country into a prolonged war that pushed plans for race reform into the background. The Second World War, followed by the civil war between the Communist Party and the Guomindang from 1945 to 1949, was the main reason why eugenic ideas did not achieve institutional expression. The Committee for the Study of Population Policies, organised by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 1941, was the first official attempt to approach population problems in a systematic way. It recommended the segregation of physically and mentally handicapped people from the normal population for what was called 'cultural advancement and racial rejuvenation'. As people were recognised to be unequally endowed, the report advocated a differential birthrate: 'Thus viewed', said the report, 'some individuals may have children, others not.'[82] The committee—whose members included Chen Changheng, Chen Da and Pan Guangdan—also encouraged the use of sterilisation for the racial improvement of the country.

Zhang Junjun and other eugenists cited Hitler and Nazi racial policies as a positive example for China.[83] Wei Juxian, the author of the substantial article on the origins of the Han people analysed in the preceeding chapter, claimed in 1933 that if eugenic policies were not adopted immediately, the 'Chinese race' was doomed to imminent extinction.[84] A eugenic laboratory (*renzhong gailiangsuo*) would have to be established in every county. Young men and women reaching marriageable age would be selected by a qualified doctor who would allow the strong and the healthy to have sexual intercourse. Expectant mothers would remain under medical control until parturition, at which stage 'weak' offspring would be eliminated. Superior babies would be called 'model person' (*mofanren*). On the other hand, products bred without supervision would be labelled 'elimination person' (*taotairen*): reproduction by such individuals would be strictly prohibited as soon as model persons made up twothirds of the population. Wei Juxian's eugenic discourse was directly inspired by the Nazi experience.[85] His article explained in detail how eugenic laws in Germany decreed the 'forceful elimination' of entire categories of people judged deficient, such as sex criminals, the incurably sick, the feebleminded and those afflicted with hereditary diseases. Wei regretted only the Nazis' lack of determination, for their laws were not always carried out in a 'thorough

way'. Although such wavering could be tolerated in the German case, a much firmer hand would be required in China to resist the cultural, economic and military invasions of other nations.

According to William Kirby, who has studied the relations between Republican China and Germany, most Chinese admirers of National Socialism actually had few reservations about Nazi racism.[86] Anti-Semitism received relatively little attention, whereas the German preoccupation with race was hailed as an example worthy of emulation. In the West, Nazi eugenics drew little criticism until the mid-1930s. It was the extreme nature of German policies that eventually led to a strong reaction, supported by a longstanding and influential anti-eugenic coalition among people of both secular and religious backgrounds.[87] Paul Popenoe, then a leading eugenist, later admitted that Nazism had been the major factor accounting for the decline of interest in race and eugenics from the mid-1930s onwards.[88]

In China, however, the fortune of eugenics suffered less from the Nazi example. After 1945, a small number of eugenists continued to toy with outdated genetic concepts such as the inheritance of behavioural traits. Hao Qinming, for instance, concluded his university textbook on heredity with a paragraph entitled 'The Urgent Need for Race Improvement'.[89] Idiots (*chiyu*), demented people (*kuangdian*), epileptics, those afflicted with 'loathsome' diseases, the malformed and those suffering from hereditary diseases would not be allowed to marry. Intervention of a coercive nature was not imperative for people with minor infirmities like deafness, dumbness, blindness or baldness: education would convince them of the necessity of voluntary sterilisation. Moral principles also guided the idea of rewarding 'superior' parents who bred 'intelligent' children. The author further expounded a theory on the differential birth rates of 'idiots' and 'intellectuals'; idiots proliferated rapidly and threatened to outbreed intellectuals, thereby upsetting the fragile balance of society. Only mass sterilisation could ward off the menace of racial cretinism. As an exercise, Hao's students were asked to draft a plan for the implementation of eugenic policies on the provincial level. They were also required to produce a letter advising the legislative court to legalise sterilisation.[90]

A final example is Hu Buchan's widely read *Eugenics and Human Heredity*, first published in 1936 and reprinted several times until 1959 without textual alterations. Hu gave a succinct description of the various

methods of race improvement.[91] The Spartan method of physically eliminating unfit infants was cruel and contradicted the spirit of eugenics. Both neo-Malthusianism and *laissez-faire* policies were categorically rejected by the author. General education and marriage restrictions were invaluable methods of improving the nation's racial stock, but could have only a limited impact. Polygamy was effective with farm animals, but was immoral and illegal when applied to human society. This left segregation and sterilisation as the only reliable eugenic techniques. Hu Buchan, whose textbook provided a balanced account of the intricate mechanisms of human heredity, resisted the temptation of defining those he referred to as 'unhealthy'. His class bias, however, emerged in a chapter concerning birth control. Hu deplored the declining birth rate of intellectuals. Although he admitted that there was no definite criterion for determining the superiority of the elite and the inferiority of the lower class, he argued that most statistics had clearly demonstrated a higher IQ among the former. Hu's class bias rested on social anxiety. His encounters with the lower classes filled him with apprehension: 'The streets are full of beggars, carrying each other on their backs, tramping around hand in hand; for it is true that the poorer people are, the higher their rate of reproduction.'[92] Hu carried the contrast between China's social classes a step further by comparing them to Rome: the ancient city had declined because the pure-blooded Romans had voluntarily limited their births, whereas slaves and foreigners had multiplied without restriction. The author somehow equated intellectuals to a pure-blooded nobility, downgrading other classes to the status of slaves.[93]

We have seen how social perceptions of skin colour and physical characteristics existed in traditional China and how racial stereotypes emerged gradually during the nineteenth century. At the turn of the century, the reformers rationalised these stereotypes and forged a racial discourse which portrayed the Chinese as a distinct biological group. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the revolutionaries narrowed down their racial definition of the nation to the Han, seen as the descendants of the mythical Yellow Emperor. After the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty and the foundation of the Republic in 1912, however, the fear of racial extinction continued to preoccupy many social thinkers. Some rejected the idea of a united Han nation and instead focused upon differences within the 'race': intellectuals were designated as 'superior', the lower classes as 'inferior'. The popularity of eugenics among the educated classes reflected

both a concern with national revival and a search for group identity. The adoption of the pseudo-science was facilitated by a distrust of individualism, disbelief in democracy, and the absence of a religion which disregarded bodily attributes in favour of a paramount spirit. A traditional social hierarchy, which distinguished sharply between educated scholars and uneducated peasants, also contributed to the emergence of eugenics during the 1920s and 1930s. Eugenics, however, remained narrowly confined to the realm of ideas. It achieved organisational expression only rarely, and did not affect government policies. Its defenders, as well as its critics, tended to be ideologues, not scientists. But eugenics did make a comeback in the communist era, briefly discussed in the next chapter.

7

RACE AS NATIONALITY (1949–2012)

Race and class under Mao

Racial theories became taboo following the communist takeover of China in 1949.[1] Anthropology departments were suspended by the end of 1949, and 'bourgeois' social sciences like anthropology and sociology were proscribed a few years later in 1952.[2] Propaganda campaigns under the supervision of reformed anthropologists were launched with the aim of eradicating racial discrimination, and anthropologists came under bitter attack during the anti-rightist campaign of 1957.[3] They were accused of having used disrespectful anthropometric methods that insulted the national minorities. It was also suspected that many of their studies were meant to prove racist ideas of ethnic inferiority.[4] Zhou Jianren, the author of numerous pamphlets advocating eugenics in the 1930s, became an official mouthpiece of the party and published a radical critique of eugenics and racial discrimination, now portrayed as imperialist tools of domination over the working class.[5] Pan Guangdan, who had made eugenics a household word in China, was singled out for severe criticism in 1957.

Genetics and physical anthropology were also denounced as 'bourgeois science'. As in the Soviet Union, Lysenko's doctrine became dominant in the 1950s and '60s while Mendelian laws of inheritance and T. H. Morgan's chromosome theory were rejected for ideological reasons. Supporters of Lysenko argued that acquired characteristics could be inherited while environmental influences could be manipulated so as to alter an organism's features. Genetic research received only limited support during the years of Lysenkoism, although some work in genetics was carried out in a handful of research hospitals.[6]

But ‘race’ was too resilient a notion simply to be abolished by decree. And while the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) appealed to ‘class’ as a unifying concept, it did not abandon the politically vital distinction between a ‘majority’ on the one hand and a range of ‘minorities’ on the other. The communists perpetuated the idea that linguistically and culturally diverse people in China actually belonged to a single, homogeneous group united by ties of blood called the Han. As the political boundaries of the country claimed by the communists corresponded largely to those of the Qing empire, people in the strategically and economically vital border regions of Xinjiang and Tibet were portrayed as ‘minorities’ in their own homelands. The communists swiftly proceeded to classify forty-one so-called ‘minority nationalities’ (*shaoshu minzu*), a number which increased to fifty-six by the time of the 1982 census.[7]

Although the idea of equality between different *minzu* was promoted by the regime in order to combat ‘Han chauvinism’ (*Da Han minzuzhuyi*), the representation of the Han as an absolute majority endowed with superior political and cultural attributes and hence destined to be the vanguard of the revolution and the forefront of economic development dominated official discourse during the Maoist period. In a manner recalling the racial taxonomies used by the revolutionaries at the beginning of the twentieth century, ‘minority nationalities’ were represented as less evolved branches of people who needed the moral and political guidance of the Han to ascend the scales of civilisation. The idea of the Han as a politically more advanced and better endowed *minzu* pervaded the early decades of the communist regime, when assimilationist policies were eagerly pursued. Immediately after 1949, hundreds of thousands of demobilised soldiers, petty thieves, beggars, vagrants and prostitutes were sent to help develop and colonise the Muslim belt which ran through Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai and Xinjiang. Colons were also sent to Tibet and other border regions dominated by people who were once in the majority, but were now referrred to as ‘minorities’.

Some of these minority people were given an empty gift called ‘autonomy’. All over China autonomous districts, autonomous counties, autonomous prefectures and autonomous regions appeared in the 1950s. Xinjiang, where Muslims had long dreamed of a Uighur Republic, was carved up into different portions, for instance the Sibo people near Gulja, the Kazakhs in the north and the Tajik in the Sarikol area of the Pamir

mountains. In October 1955 the Uighur presence was formally recognised by naming Xinjiang an Uighur Autonomous Region. But borders of the 'autonomous' parts of the province were drawn in such a way that no ethnic group could control an area they dominated numerically. Territories with a relatively homogeneous minority were divided up, while cities and prefectures with large Uighur populations were denied any autonomous status. The Ili Kazakh autonomous prefecture was set up in a region dominated by Uighurs, while Korla was the capital of a Mongol autonomous prefecture mostly populated by Uighurs. It was a predictable strategy of divide and rule, or, to borrow from ancient Chinese tactics, a case of 'using barbarians to deal with barbarians'. And from top to bottom the party controlled every important decision in these government structures.[8]

The communists also asserted their leadership over the rest of the developing world, in terms which formally invoked 'class' but were more reminiscent of 'race'. As the political scientist Stuart Schram has written, 'Mao's appeal is not merely to a union based upon revolutionary principles, but to the visceral solidarity of peoples long oppressed and humiliated by the white powers of Europe and America.'[9] In an often quoted speech, delivered in 1963, Mao claimed that 'in Africa, in Asia, in every part of the world there is racism; in reality, racial problems are class problems.'[10]

The resilience of racial thinking was apparent in attitudes towards both Europeans and Africans. Official propaganda, for example, fostered the idea that only Westerners could indulge in racism, as the Chinese had become the leaders of the victimised 'coloured' people in the historical struggle against 'white imperialism'. It was an important ingredient of anti-imperialist propaganda, which reached almost hysterical proportions during the Korean War and the Cultural Revolution.[11] Louis Barcata met some Chinese intellectuals in 1967 and was particularly struck by a professor from Shanghai:

> Whatever his views on domestic issues, in foreign policy the professor stood by Mao unconditionally. He hated the Russians who, he claimed, behaved more like opponents than comrades. He regarded the Vietnam conflict as a 'holy war', and as the prelude to an inevitable conflict between the races. For this professor, who had done some traveling in the world, and who had once gone to South Africa to study apartheid, the white man is the only creature on earth whose behavior is fundamentally warped, whose being suffers from a mechanical flaw; the white man is the 'greatest source of discord in all creation'. The others who took part in the discussion agreed with him completely. I was taken aback by the very vehemence of their posture. These seven men saw the history of mankind as

nothing but a sequence of brutal injustices inflicted by the white man on the colored peoples of the world. These Chinese intellectuals were convinced that the coming world conflict would be ignited not solely by an ideological confrontation but by racial antagonism. It would be an epic struggle between the races—an Armageddon in which China would lead the exploited colored peoples in their battle against the powers of white reaction.[12]

In its propaganda about revolution, China placed itself on the top of a global racial hierarchy, leading the 'coloured peoples' on the bottom towards liberation. This was apparent in Africa, where China tried to capitalise on a common racial identity, urging that 'we blacks stick together' against the 'white race', an idea which was met with scepticism on the African side.[13] Acting troupes endeavoured to propagate the idea of racial solidarity, as was exemplified by a play performed in Rwanda in the early 1960s:

A tableau depicted a black man sitting on a throne; a Chinese actor with a white mask then entered and knocked him off [groans from crowd]. A Chinese with no mask entered, knocks the 'white man' in turn off the throne, picks up the African from the ground and helps him back on to the throne [cheers from crowd].'[14]

Despite the communist imagery of racial unity with the victims of imperialism, many Chinese adopted an aloof and exclusive attitude during their stay in Africa. Africans studying in China, on the other hand, were often the victim of indirect or overt discrimination. Emmanuel Hevi, a Ghanaian studying medicine in Beijing in the early 1960s, testified to the continuous discrimination Africans had to endure in China. He perceived paternalism as an important form of prejudice: 'In all their dealings with us the Chinese behaved as if they were dealing with people from whom normal intelligence could not be expected.'[15] As Michael Sullivan has pointed out, Mao's assistance to Africa reinforced the negative image of Africans as passive recipients of the fruits of higher civilisations, and intensified popular discontent at wasting wealth on Africans when many Chinese lived in extreme poverty.[16]

Race and nation since 1978

The emphasis on class struggle and doctrinaire insistence on ideology at the expense of economics was reversed after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. After the ascent to power of Deng Xiaoping in 1978 and the gradual opening of the country, the language of science started to replace

communist ideology in a number of politically sensitive domains. One of the effects of the revival of biological science was massive research on the 'national minorities'. Instead of portraying them as culturally or 'racially' distinct groups of people, a whole range of studies started claiming that they were organically linked to the majority of Han people. This was not an innovation, but harked back to the republican era, when the Guomindang, the party founded by Sun Yatsen, had already proposed a vision which emphasised both the organic unity of all the peoples living within the political boundaries of China and the inevitable fusion of non-Han groups into a broader Chinese nation dominated by the Han. Chiang Kaishek (1887–1975), the effective head of the country from 1927 to 1949 and leader of the Guomindang, clearly expressed this vision of the nation as a culturally diverse but racially unified entity in his important work entitled *China's Destiny*, written during the fight against Japan in the Second World War:

> Our various clans actually belong to the same nation, as well as to the same racial stock. Therefore, there is an inner factor closely linking the historical destiny of common existence and common sorrow and joy of the whole Chinese nation. That there are five peoples designated in China is not due to differences in race or blood, but to religion and geographical environment. In short, the differentiation among China's five peoples is due to regional and religious factors, and not to race or blood. This fact must be thoroughly understood by all our fellow countrymen.[17]

A few other studies by conservative thinkers in the Guomindang appeared in the 1930s making the same point. Xiong Shili, for instance, argued that the five 'races' that Sun Yatsen had identified (Manchu, Mongols, Hui, Tibetans and Han) were actually related branches of the same line of evolution in which the Han were dominant.[18] Li Ji and Lin Yan, as we have seen in Chapter 5, argued that all the inhabitants of China had a common ancestor. Chiang Kaishek referred to this line of descent as a 'Chinese nationality' (*Zhonghua minzu*). Although this approach remained marginal in the republican era, it became mainstream in the People's Republic after 1978. The notion of a 'Chinese nationality' became the basis for arguing that the political boundaries of the country were based on biological markers. Tibetans and Uighurs, for instance, were depicted as people who were merging biologically into a larger 'Chinese nationality' of which the Han formed the core.

Serological studies were carried out in the 1980s to highlight the biological proximity of all minority people to the Han.[19] Mainly initiated by

Professor Zhao Tongmao, estimations of genetic distance based on gene frequency claimed that the racial differences between population groups living within China—including Tibetans, Mongols and Uighurs—were comparatively small. Serologists also observed that the 'Negroid race' and the 'Caucasian race' were more closely related to each other than to the 'Mongoloid race'. Zhao Tongmao put the Han at the very centre of his chart, which branched out gradually to include other minority groups from China in a tree highlighting the genetic distance between 'yellows' on the one hand and 'whites' and 'blacks' on the other. The author hypothesised that the genetic differences within the 'yellow race' could be divided into a 'northern' and a 'southern' variation, which might even have different origins. His conclusion underlined that the Han were the main branch of the 'yellow race' in China to which all the minority groups could be traced: the political boundaries of the People's Republic, in other words, appeared to be founded on clear biological markers of genetic distance.[20]

In similar vein, skulls, hair, eyes, noses, ears, entire bodies and even the penises of thousands of subjects were routinely measured, weighed and assessed by anthropometrists in the 1980s and 1990s in attempts to identify the 'special characteristics' (*tezheng*) of minority people. To take but one example, Zhang Zhenbiao, a senior anthropometrist writing in the prestigious *Acta Anthropologica Sinica*, reached the following conclusion after measurements of 145 Tibetans: 'In conclusion, as demonstrated by the results of an investigation into the special characteristics of the heads and faces of contemporary Tibetans, their heads and faces are fundamentally similar to those of various other nationalities of our country, in particular to those of our country's north and north-west (including the Han and national minorities). It is beyond doubt that the Tibetans and the other nationalities of our country descend from a common origin and belong, from the point of view of physical characteristics, to the same East-Asian type of yellow race (*huangzhongren de Dongya leixing*).'[21] The political implications of such research for minority people in the PRC was apparent in the government's promotion of China as the 'homeland of the modern yellow race', of which even Outer Mongolia was described as an organic and integral part.[22]

To this day, within both scientific institutions and government circles, people in China are represented as one relatively homogeneous 'Chinese nationality' (*Zhonghua minzu*) of which minority people are organic parts. As W. J. F. Jenner puts it rather appropriately, the idea of a 'Chinese

nationality' means, in effect, that 'all the nationalities are, beneath their apparent diversity, one'.[23]

Belief in polygenism, the idea that humans have different origins, was also revived in the 1980s, and served to reinforce this nationalist vision of racial unity. Prominent researchers represented Beijing Man at Zhoukoudian as the 'ancestor' of the 'Mongoloid race' (*Menggu renzhong*). A great number of hominid teeth, skull fragments and fossil apes, discovered at different sites scattered over China since 1949, were used to support the view that the 'yellow race' (*huangzhong*) was in a direct line of descent from its hominid ancestor in China. Although palaeoanthropologists in China acknowledged that the fossil evidence pointed to Africa as the birthplace of all humans, highly regarded researchers like Jia Lanpo repeatedly emphasised that man's real place of origin should be located in East Asia. Wu Rukang, also one of the most eminent palaeoanthropologists in China, came very close to upholding a polygenesist thesis in mapping different geographical spaces for the 'yellow race' (China), the 'black race' (Africa) and the 'white race' (Europe): 'The fossils of homo sapiens discovered in China all prominently display the characteristics of the yellow race… pointing at the continuous nature between them, the yellow race and contemporary Chinese people.'[24]

Early hominids present in China since the early Middle Pleistocene (one million years ago) were believed to be the origin to which all the population groups in the People's Republic could be traced back. Physical anthropologists also invoked detailed craniological examinations to provide 'irrefutable evidence' about a continuity in development between early hominids and the 'modern Mongoloid race'.[25] Scientific research on prehistoric fossil bones was carried out to represent the nation's racial past as characterised by the gradual emergence of a Han 'majority' into which different 'minorities' would have merged.[26] As one close observer has noted, 'In the West, scientists treat the Chinese fossil evidence as part of the broad picture of human evolution worldwide; in China, it is part of national history—an ancient and fragmentary part, it is true, but none the less one that is called upon to promote a unifying concept of unique origin and continuity within the Chinese nation.'[27]

These theories have not changed substantially with the appearance of new DNA evidence. Every new discovery in China, it seems, is jumped

upon to question the 'Out of Africa' thesis. When an ancient skull was dug up in Henan in 2008, it was widely interpreted as evidence that most of the people living in China were descendants of a native lineage whose uninterrupted evolution could be traced back millions of years. As the *China Daily* put it, 'The discovery at Xuchang supports the theory that modern Chinese man originated in what is present-day Chinese territory rather than Africa.'[28]

These were not the isolated musings of a few excentric intellectuals. The *Acta Anthropologica Sinica*, China's flagship journal in human anthropology quoted above, was systematically investigated by a team of researchers. They discovered that between 1982 and 2001, all of the 779 articles directly related to the study of human variation used the notion of 'race' and none of them questioned its value. The authors of the survey contrasted their findings to those obtained in Poland and the United States, the two other countries they surveyed, and concluded that in China, 'race seems to be accepted as "natural" by all generations of anthropologists.'[29]

Eugenics

Eugenics made a dramatic comeback under Deng Xiaoping.[30] Medical experts and population specialists were put into powerful positions of responsibility after official policies aimed at population control were revived by the government in 1978. Besides the one-child family programme, by which the government only in exceptional circumstances allowed parents to have more than one or occasionally two children, an important component of these policies was the improvement of the quality of new-born babies. A prolific medical discourse appeared in the 1980s and 90s, concerned with the presumed dysgenic tendencies of the population. The journal *Population and Eugenics*, published for a popular audience by the Population Research Centre of Zhejiang Medical College in Hangzhou, specifically deplored the increasing number of 'sub-products' (*cipin*) and 'reject products' (*feipin*) born every year. In an astounding departure from the rhetoric of Maoism, the journal specifically targetted 'peasants', deemed to have 'ugly habits' (*chengui louxi*), not least contracting consanguineous marriages and having children outside of wedlock.[31] As another author put it, peasants 'do not read books, do not read newspapers, lead an unhealthy lifestyle, drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes, gamble and whore, and even take

concubines and drugs, thus directly endangering the health of the next generation, engendering one batch after the other of retarded children.'[32] Because inferior elements reproduced themselves so quickly in the countryside, natural laws of selection in which 'the superior win and the inferior lose' (*yousheng liebai*) were replaced by a more worrying trend of 'the inferior win and the superior lose' (*liesheng youbai*).[33] Premier Li Peng put it in less ambivalent terms in a public statement made in 1991: 'Idiots breed idiots'.[34]

Throughout the 1980s, numerous medical publications lobbied for a eugenics law. According to Zhou Xiaozheng, affiliated with the Population Research Centre of Beijing University, widespread prenatal testing should warrant the detection of birth defects at an early stage of pregnancy, while the abortion of foetuses with minor defects such as a harelip or supernumerary fingers could take place between the eighteenth and the twentieth week.[35] The moral value and economic meaning of euthanasia was also regularly underlined in journals on demography and medical ethics in the early 1990s.[36] In an article published in the respected *Sociological Research* and reprinted in the April 1991 issue of *Demography*, Mu Guangzong, a lecturer at the Population Studies Centre of the People's University and one of the most vocal proponents of euthanasia, proposed a sociological definition of medical death called 'zero worth' (*ling suzhi*): individuals are intrinsic parts of a larger collectivity, and their worth is defined by the contribution they can make to society. As 'inferior births' have 'zero worth' and make no such contribution, society has the right medically to eliminate them. According to Mu Guangzong, the warning of the great Victorian scientist T. H. Huxley should be heeded: if quality of life were not strictly controlled, bad genetic mutations would accumulate and humanity would head towards suicide.[37]

Even eugenic writings from the 1930s were rehabilitated: ostracised for decades as a 'rightist element', Pan Guangdan was not only hailed as China's 'father of eugenics' in popular literature, but his writings from the republican period were reprinted and uncritically recommended for their 'scientific value' even in *Hereditas*, the leading journal in human genetics.[38]

The costs of maintaining disabled people was often invoked in the 1980s to justify eugenic legislation. Chen Muhua, Vice-President of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and President of the Women's

Federation, declared: ‘Eugenics not only affects the success of the state and the prosperity of the race, but also the well-being of the people and social stability.’[39] The Eugenics Symposium over which she presided in Beijing on 28 January 1989 judged that more than 30 million people in the People’s Republic were genetically defective: the total cost of their maintenance was estimated at seven to eight billion yuan a year, and the symposium advocated eugenic education and legislation. Similar to the articles and charts depicting the costs of keeping alive the impaired at the expense of the healthy in a number of European countries throughout the 1930s, meticulous calculations were made to estimate that each patient cost 25 yuan and consumed about 25 jin of cereals every month.

The first national exhibition on eugenics and the scientific control of human reproduction, entitled ‘Human Reproduction and Health’, opened in the Shanghai Exhibition Centre in November 1993 and used graphs to illustrate the ‘heavy burden’ represented by the country’s disabled.[40] In these official calculations, human life was reduced to financial terms, while population health was seen as a negative balance sheet to be redressed in the interests of public well-being. The disabled were described as a financial burden and a drain on public resources, as a mere figure was adduced to illustrate the useless dissipation of costly medications.

Similar views, of course, existed in many developed countries until a few decades ago. Only very recently has the notion of a unique human value been associated with disabled infants in a small number of economically advanced societies. Eugenic programmes and sterilisation laws were an integral part of the welfare system in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden up till 1960.[41] An efficient administration ensured that the laws were thoroughly implemented: by 1960, well over 50,000 people had been sterilised by the initiative of the Swedish government, at first on medical grounds but later for social reasons. In Finland till recently, many medical practitioners were in favour of sterilisation and few members of the public had the desire or opportunity to dispute expert opinion. In the absence of any substantial objections, almost 2,000 people were sterilised between 1935 and 1955. In marked contrast to the commonly accepted observation that eugenics declined rapidly after the Second World War, the total number of operations performed in Finland sharply increased, and by 1970 the total had reached 56,000. Forced sterilisations for eugenic reasons were performed in parts of Switzerland for decades after the end of the Second

World War.[42] Seen in a comparative perspective, eugenics in the PRC was not the exception so much as an integral part of far more widespread trends which have been prominent throughout the twentieth century.

But the PRC alone enacted eugenic laws as late as the 1980s. On 25 November 1988, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of Gansu Province passed the country's first law prohibiting 'mentally retarded people' from having children. According to the law, those 'mentally retarded people' whose condition was either inherited or a consequence of marriage between close relatives were not allowed to have children; no 'mentally retarded people' were allowed to get married unless they had undergone sterilisation surgery; those who had married before the promulgation of the law were also to undergo sterilisation surgery; and pregnant women suffering from mental retardation were required to have their pregnancies terminated. Individuals who violated the law by allowing 'mentally retarded people' to have children would be punished by both administrative and economic means. A similar law was enacted by Liaoning province in February 1990, while Zhejiang province passed a law on the preservation of 'eugenic health' in June 1992 to combat the increasing incidence of 'cretins', who were estimated to number more than 300,000. The Henan eugenics law of 1992 required that if one partner in a married couple suffered from a 'chronic mental disorder' such as schizophrenia or manic depression, that partner should be sterilised. People who refused to be sterilised or anyone who impeded the sterilisation of another could be subject to penalties.

Under pressure from a variety of lobbies, mainly family planning experts and geneticists, the provincial laws finally culminated in the People's Republic of China passing eugenic legislation at the national level at the beginning of 1995. The law aimed to prevent 'inferior births' from becoming a burden on the state and society. Renamed Maternal and Infant Health Law after protests against a preliminary draft entitled Eugenics Law (*Youshengfa*), it supported the systematic 'implementation of premarital medical check-ups' in order to detect whether one partner in a couple suffers from a 'serious hereditary', venereal or reproductive disorder, a 'relevant mental disorder' or a 'legal contagious disease': it asserted that those 'deemed unsuitable for reproduction' should be urged to undergo sterilisation or abortion, or to remain celibate, in order to prevent 'inferior births'. Foreign observers, however, soon pointed out that the

implementation of eugenic legislation not only undermined the rights of the person vis-à-vis the state, but was also based on controversial if not antiquated theories of human heredity. After foreign criticism of the eugenics law, the mandatory health check was dropped at the national level, but continued to be required by some provinces. Local doctors make the decision on who is 'unfit' to marry.[43]

Popular racism

While this chapter, like the rest of the book, is concerned mainly with racial categorisations developed by scholars and scientists, there is good evidence to show that since the country has become more familiar with the outside world after decades of Maoism, racist incidents have increased, rather than decreased. Friction between African students and local Chinese, for instance, marked the 1980s, leading to violent clashes involving casualties on both sides in a dozen cases. In 1988–9, thousands of Chinese students, fuelled by a variety of racist rumours, set about assaulting and destroying the dormitories of African students in Nanjing, Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin, shouting 'Kill the black devils!'[44] Yinghong Cheng, a first-rate analyst of racism in the People's Republic, has made the important point that before these incidents, racism was a matter of belief: now it became one of racist behaviour.[45]

Individual African students were regularly targetted for harrassment in public. Boubacar Traoré, a student from Ghana studying philosophy in China in 1988, complained that 'When we walk on the street, people insult us. They call us black devils, and so on. Even if we're alone, they insult us. And if we're with a girl, they say she's a hooker and is doing it for the money.'[46]

Attitudes have not improved in the twenty-first century. M. Dujon Johnson calls it 'Afrophobia', noting how 'In China today there is a clear social hierarchy based on the assumption of racial superiority'.[47] But the victims no longer include students alone. In Guangzhou, where a thriving community of African merchants has emerged, some local people complain about what they call 'chocolate city'. Here is how one resident described the dangers of this 'racial invasion': 'African blacks are an inferior race. Children of Chinese and African blacks should be regarded as mixed but inferior race. If we take no action, this kind of race will blacken China. This

has nothing to do with racial discrimination, but is simply a matter of eugenics. We should admit that the white is a superior race, the same as us. The children of whites and Chinese are accordingly relatively superior.'[48]

Such attitudes also have an impact on the children of mixed marriages. In 2009, an outpouring of racial hatred marked the appearance in a talent show of Lou Jing, who has a Shanghainese mother and an African-American father who left China before her birth. Some of the blogs, which demeaned her with racist slurs and demands that she leave the country, attracted tens of thousands of hits.

The internet has also been instrumental in spreading prejudice about Africans. An analysis of web comments showed how they are portrayed as as lazy, poor and oversexed. One online message posted during the Beijing Olympics in August 2008, for example, expressed amazement at African athletes: 'it seems that the darkest among the Negroes are the most powerful ones'.[49]

Liu Xiaobo—one of the student leaders during the Tiananmen pro-democracy movement, a prominent dissident and Nobel Peace Prize winner in 2010—discovered just how deep racism runs when he surveyed the web after a visit to China by Condoleezza Rice in 2005. In hundreds of rants reminiscent of the Cultural Revolution, popular websites attacked the US Secretary of State as a 'black pig', a 'black devil' or a 'black female dog'. Liu noted that the racism he discovered on the web was so widespread that few readers in China were bothered by it.[50]

In the conclusion of the first edition of this book, published in 1992, I invoked the words of Yang Lien-sheng, a scholar and historian who wrote that racism should be 'spelled out in order to be dispelled'.[51] It is a sad indictment of how little racism has changed over the past twenty years that the only prominent scholar in China who actually studied the phenomenon and denounced it publicly, namely Liu Xiaobo, is now lingering in goal. It was still possible, twenty years ago, to imagine that the racism that could then be found in the People's Republic was merely the result of ignorance after the country had been closed to the rest of the world for decades under Chairman Mao. Denial, rather than ignorance, appears to be the norm today.

NOTES

PREFACE TO THE REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION

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2. Nikolas Rose, 'Intoduction to the discussion of race and ethnicity in *Nature Genetics*', *BioSocieties*, 2006, no. 1, pp. 307–311.
3. Joanna L. Mountain and Neil Risch, 'Assessing genetic contributions to phenotypic differences among "racial" and "ethnic" groups', *Nature Genetics*, 36, no. 11 (2004), p. 52.
4. Armand Leroi, 'A family tree in every gene', *New York Times*, 14 March 2005.
5. Edouard Machery and Luc Faucher, 'Why do we think racially?' in Henri Cohen and Claire Lefebvre (eds), *Handbook of categorization in cognitive science*, Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2005, p. 1014.
6. Ron Mallon, 'Was race thinking invented in the modern West?', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, part A, vol. 44, no. 1 (March 2013), p. 83.
7. Jan J. L. Duyvendak, *China's discovery of Africa*, London: Arthur Probsthain, 1949, p. 24.
8. Xu Jiyu, *Yinghuan zhilüe* (A brief survey of the maritime circuit), Osaka: Kanbun, 1861, *juan* 4, p. 7b.
9. Jim Mann, 'Peking denies racism caused clashes between Chinese and African students', *Los Angeles Times*, 8 June 1986.
10. Frank Dikötter, 'Reading the body: Genetic knowledge and social marginalisation in the PRC', *China Information*, 13, nos 2–3 (Dec. 1998), pp. 1–13.
11. Zhang Zhenbiao, 'Zangzu de tizhi tezheng' (The physical characteristics of the Tibetan nationality), *Renleixue xuebao*, 4, no. 3 (Aug. 1985), pp. 250–7.

PREFACE

1. Some notable exceptions include Julia Blackburn, *The white men: The first response of aboriginal peoples to the white man*, London: Orbis, 1979; Gustav Jahoda, *White man: A study of the attitudes of Africans to Europeans in Ghana before independence*, London: Oxford University Press, 1961, an anthropological inquiry based on interviews; V. Gorog, *Noirs et blancs. Leur image dans la litterature orale africaine*, Paris: SELAF, 1976, based on the textual analysis of 161 documents of oral literature. Pathbreaking is Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In my father's house: Africa in the philosophy of culture*, Oxford University Press, 1992.
2. Han perceptions of national minorities have already been extensively treated. For an introduction, see Thomas Heberer, *China and its national minorities*, Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1989; June T. Dreyer, *China's forty millions: Minority nationalities and national integration in the People's Republic of China*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976, and Jonathan N. Lipman, 'Ethnicity and politics in Republican China', *Modern China*, 10, no. 3 (July 1984), pp. 285–316.

1. RACE AS CULTURE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1. Harold R. Isaacs, 'Group identity and political change: The role of color and physical characteristics', *Daedalus*, Spring 1967, p. 367.
2. For a general introduction to the traditional Chinese world view and the tributary system upon which relations with foreign countries were often based, see John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese world order: Traditional China's foreign relations*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968.
3. Hsiao Kung-chuan, *A history of Chinese political thought*, Princeton University Press, 1979, p. 24.
4. James Legge, *The Chinese classics*, London: Henry Frowde, 1860–72, vol. 5, part 1, pp. 354–5.
5. Yang Lien-sheng, 'Historical notes on the Chinese world order' in Fairbank, *The Chinese world order*, p. 24. This quotation from the *Zuozhuan* has not been translated by James Legge.
6. See Lionello Lanciotti, '"Barbaren" in altchinesischer Sicht', *Antaios*, 6 (March 1968), p. 573.
7. See Clae Waltham, *Shu ching, book of history: A modernized edition of the translation of James Legge*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1971, pp. 39–54.
8. Ruth I. Meserve, 'The inhospitable land of the barbarian', *Journal of Asian History*, 16 (1982), p. 54.
9. See C. C. Muller, 'Die Herausbildung der Gegensätze: Chinesen und Barbaren in der frühen Zeit' in Wolfgang Bauer (ed.), *China und die Fremden. 3000 Jahre Auseinandersetzung in Krieg und Frieden*, Munich: Beck, 1980, p. 62.
10. Romila Thapar, 'The image of the barbarian in early India', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 13 (1971), p. 411.
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12. The following examples are taken from Rémi Mathieu, *Etude sur la mythologie et l'ethnologie de la Chine ancienne. Traduction annotée du Shanhai jing*, Paris: Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1983, pp. 89, 414, 389, 397, 445, 451–2.
13. Meserve, 'The inhospitable land', p. 55.
14. Ibid., p. 56.
15. Frank M. Snowden, *Before color prejudice: The ancient view of Blacks*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 46 ff. and 63.
16. On the Yin-Yang school, see Alfred Forke, *The world conception of the Chinese: Their astronomical, cosmological and physico-philosophical speculations*, London: Probsthain, 1925.
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2. RACE AS TYPE (1793–1895)

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43. Waley, *The Opium War*, pp. 68–9.
44. Zhigang, *Chushi Taixiji* (Notes on the first mission to the West), Beijing: Yuelu shushe, 1985, p. 374.
45. Xu Jiyu, *Yinghuan zhilüe* (A brief survey of the maritime circuit), Osaka: Kanbun edn, 1861, *juan* 4, p. 7b.
46. Zhang Deyi, *Suishi Faguo ji* (Notes on following the mission to France), Beijing: Yuelu shushe, 1985, p. 450.
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one observer explain to bystanders that 'in their country the women have beards exactly the same as the men'; Chester Holcombe, *The real Chinaman*, New York: Dodd and Mead, 1895, p. 173. Misconceptions were of course rife on both sides: Zhang Deyi complained that in Russia many people mistook him for a woman because of his queue (pigtail) and his gown; Zhang Deyi, *Hanghai shuqi* (Travels abroad), Beijing: Yuelu shushe 1985, p. 553. Chinese diplomats used to ride ladies bicycles because of their long gowns, thereby reinforcing their female appearance to Westerners; see W. W. Yen, *East-West kaleidoscope 1877–1946: An autobiography*, New York: St John's University, 1974, p. 21.

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71. Binchun, *Chengcha biji* (Travels abroad), Beijing: Yuelu shushe, 1985, p. 101.

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74. Qi Zhaoxi, *You Meizhou riji* (Diary on my travels in America), Beijing: Yuelu shushe, 1985, p. 225.
75. Li Gui, *Huanyou diqiu xinlu* (New records on my travels around the world), Beijing: Yuelu shushe, 1985, p. 333.
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3. RACE AS LINEAGE (1895–1903)

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4. See Samuel C. Chu, 'China's attitudes toward Japan at the time of the Sino-Japanese War' in Akira Iriye, *The Chinese and the Japanese: Essays in political and cultural interactions*, Princeton University Press, 1980, pp. 74–95.
5. Roswell S. Britton, *The Chinese periodical press, 1800–1912*, Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, 1933, p. 93; see also Natascha Vittinghoff, 'Unity vs uniformity: Liang Qichao and the invention of a "new journalism" for China', *Late Imperial China*, 23, no. 1 (June 2002), pp. 97–143.

6. See Hao Chang, *Chinese intellectuals in crisis: Search for order and meaning (1890–1911)*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
7. Quoted in Leo O. Lee and Andrew J. Nathan, 'The beginnings of mass culture: Journalism and fiction in the late Ch'ing and beyond' in David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan and Evelyn S. Rawski (eds), *Popular culture in late imperial China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, p. 368.
8. The expression 'lowest' reflects widespread belief in environmental determinism, and thus had a geographical as well as an evolutionary connotation. The 1959 Beijing edition explains how this was part of the 'persistent vilification of the black race by the capitalist and imperialist countries'. Yan Fu, *Yan Fu shiwen xuan* (Selected poems and writings of Yan Fu), Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1959, p. 39, n. 78.
9. Ibid., p. 20.
10. Liang Qichao, 'Xin shixue' (New historiography) in *Yinbingshi wenji* (Collected writings of Liang Qichao), Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1941 (hereafter *YBSWJ*), 4, 9: 11; see also another important article entitled 'Lun minzu jingzheng zhi dashi' (About the general trend of racial struggles) in *YBSWJ*, 4, 10: 10–35.
11. On *shangzhan*, see Wang Ermin, 'Shangzhan guannian yu zhongshang sixiang' (The idea of commercial warfare and the importance attached to commerce), *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan*, 5 (June 1966), pp. 1–91.
12. The following is mainly based on Hu Hsien Chin, *The common descent group in China and its functions*, New York: Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology, 1948.
13. See Harry J. Lamley, 'Hsieh-tou: The pathology of violence in south-eastern China', *Ch'ingshih Wen-t'i*, 3, no. 7 (Nov. 1977), pp. 1–39.
14. The belief in the polygenist origins of humanity was shared by racial theorists in Japan, a country which had much in common with China. The first Japanese mission abroad stopped in Angola in 1860 on its way to the United States. The natives were thought to resemble the Buddhist images and it was concluded that 'the natives of India and Africa both belong to one and the same tribe, of whom that Buddha must have been a chieftain'. The diarist of the mission regretted that his country had worshipped such 'primitive people' for so long; see Marius B. Jansen, *Japan and its world: Two centuries of change*, Princeton University Press, 1980, p. 47. For a study of the importance of skin colour in Japan, see Hiroshi Wagatsuma, 'The social perception of skin color in Japan', *Daedalus*, Spring 1967, pp. 407–43, the classic John W. Dower, *War without mercy: Race and power in the Pacific War*, New York: Pantheon, 1986, as well as Michael Weiner, *Race and migration in imperial Japan*, London: Routledge, 2004 and Frank Dikötter, (ed.), *The construction of racial identities in China and Japan: Historical and contemporary perspectives*, London: Hurst; Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997.
15. Cohen, *China and Christianity*, p. 25.
16. Liang, 'Xin shixue' in YBSWJ, 4, 9: 12.
17. For a more detailed discussion of Lacouperie's thesis, see Chapter 4, below.
18. Jiang Zhiyou, *Zhongguo renzhong kao* (Inquiry into the Chinese race), Shanghai: Huatong shuju, 1929 (1st edn 1910).
19. See Hu Bingxiong, 'Lun Zhongguo zhongzu' (About the Chinese race), *Dongfang zazhi*, 4, no. 8 (Aug. 1908), pp. 361–85.
20. Quoted in Hardy, *John Chinaman*, pp. 321–2.
25. Yan, *Yan Fu shiwen xuan*, p. 22.
26. Liang Qichao, 'Shengjixue xueshuo yange xiaoshi' (Short history of the evolution of the science of livelihood) in YBSWJ, 5, 12: 4.
27. Liang Qichao, 'Xin dalu youji' (Travel notes on America) in Liang Qichao, *Yinbingshi zhuanji* (Writings of Liang Qichao), Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1941 (hereafter *YBSZJ*), 5, 22: 99.
28. Liang Qichao, 'Xiaweiyi youji' (Travel notes on Hawaii) in *YBSZJ*, 5, 22: 196.

25. Liang Qichao, ‘Lun Hunan ying ban zhi shi’ (About the affairs Hunan should handle) in *YBSWJ*, 2, 3: 41.
26. Liang, ‘Xin dalu’ in *YBSZJ*, 5, 22: 86.
27. *Xiangxue xinbao* (The Hunan news), 1, no. 1 (1897), reprinted, Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1966, p. 8.
28. Yan, *Yan Fu shiwen xuan*, pp. 20–2.
29. Greene, *The death of Adam*, p. 222.
30. Tang Caichang, *Juedianmingzhai neiyan* (Essays on political and historical matters), Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1968, p. 141.
31. Zhang Zhidong, *Zhang Wenxiang gong quanji* (The complete papers of Zhang Zhidong), Beijing, 1937, *juan* 103, p. 16a.
32. Tang, *Juedianmingzhai*, p. 472.
33. See John Fryer, *Gezhi congshu*, 1901, *ce* 1, *juan* 12, p. 2a. A compendium of Western science published in Hong Kong in 1897 also briefly mentioned the five races; see *Xixue gezhi daquan* (Compendium of Western science), Hong Kong: Xianggang shuju, 1897, *ce* 1, ‘dili’, p. 6a.
34. Liang, ‘Xin shixue’ in *YBSWJ*, 4, 9: 12.
35. John B. Henderson, *The development and decline of Chinese cosmology*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984, p. 8.
36. Wright, *Buddhism*, p. 37.
37. Tang Caichang, when mentioning the ancient Chinese tribes, often used these symbolic colours; see for example Tang, *Juedianmingzhai*, p. 525.
38. Ibid., p. 501.
39. See Jing Junjian, ‘Hierarchy in the Qing dynasty’, *Social Sciences in China*, 1 (1982), p. 166; see also Ch’u T’ung-tsu, *Law and society in traditional China*, Paris: Mouton, 1965, pp. 128–35.
40. See Anders Hansson, *Chinese outcasts: Discrimination and emancipation in late imperial China*, Leiden: Brill, 1996.
41. James H. Cole, ‘Social discrimination in traditional China: The To-min of Shaohsing’, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 25, part 1 (1982), p. 103.
42. See Derk Bodde, ‘Types of Chinese categorical thinking’ in *Essays on Chinese civilization*, Princeton University Press, 1981, pp. 141–60.
43. Tang, *Juedianmingzhai*, p. 468.
48. Ibid., p. 563. The macaque, *mihou*, had first been assimilated to the ‘blue-eyed, red-bearded barbarians’ during the Han; see above, Chapter 1.
49. Liang Qichao, ‘Lun Zhongguo zhi jiangqiang’ (About the future power of China) in *YBSWJ*, 2, 2: 13.
50. Liang Qichao, ‘Lun Zhongguo renzhong zhi jianglai’ (About the future of the Chinese race) in *YBSWJ*, 2, 3: 52; see also 2, 3: 41; 3, 4: 8; 5, 22: 87.
51. Liang, ‘Xin dalu’ in *YBSZJ*, 5, 22: 87.
52. Young Lung-chang, ‘Regional stereotypes in China’, *Chinese Studies in History*, 21, no. 45 (Summer 1988), pp. 32–57.
49. Liang, ‘Lun Zhongguo renzhong zhi jianglai’ in *YBSWJ*, *2*, 3: 52.
50. Liang Qichao, ‘Zhongguoshi xulun’ (About Chinese history), *YBSWJ*, 3, 6: 6; ‘Lun Zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi dashi’ (About the general trend of the changes in Chinese scientific thought) in *YBSWJ*, 3, 7:4 for example.
51. Liang, ‘Lun Zhongguo renzhong zhi jianglai’ in *YBSWJ*, 2, 3: 52–4.
52. Liang Qichao, ‘Lun Zhongguo guomin zhi pinge’ (About China’s national quality) in *YBSWJ*, 5, 14: 5; see also 3, 6: 44.
53. *Shiwubao* (Current affairs), reprinted, Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1967, vol. 1, pp. 361–2; see also p. 311.

54. Liang Qichao, ‘Xinminshuo’ (About renewing the people) in *YBSZJ*, 3, 4: 7–8; see also ‘Ouzhou dili dashi lun’ (About the general trend of European geography) in *YBSWJ*, 4, 10: 101–6.
55. Liang, ‘Xin shixue’ in *YBSWJ*, 4, 9: 19.
56. Liang Qichao, ‘Yuenan zhi wangguo shi’ (The history of Vietnam’s national subjugation) in *YBSZJ*, 4, 19: 24–6.
57. Liang Qichao, ‘Lun Mei Fei Ying Du zhi zhanshi guanxi yu Zhongguo’ (About the effects of international conflicts on China) in *YBSWJ*, 4, 11: 2. See also Liang Qichao, ‘Mieguo xinfa lun’ (About a new way of exterminating a country) in *YBSWJ*, 3, 6: 38.
58. Liang, ‘Lun Zhongguo zhi jiangqiang’ in *YBSWJ*, *2, 2:* 13.
59. Philip Huang, *Liang Ch’i-ch’ao and modern Chinese liberalism*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972, p. 47. For the influence of Japan on Liang, see Huang’s third chapter; for an account of Liang’s translation of Shiba Shirō’s pan-Asian novel *Jiaren qiyu* (Strange encounters of elegant females), see pp. 49–52.
60. Liang, *Qingyibao* in *YBSWJ*, 2, 3: 31.
61. Liang, ‘Lun xue Ribenwen zhi yi’ (About the advantage of learning Japanese) in *YBSWJ*, *2*, 4: 82.
62. Liang Qichao, *‘Qingyibao* zhi xingzhi’ (The nature of the *Qingyibao*) in *YBSWJ*, 3, 6: 54.
63. Liang Qichao, ‘Yazhou dili dashi lun’ (About the general trend in Asian geography) in *YBSWJ*, 4, 10: 76.
64. Liang, ‘Lun Zhongguo xueshu’ in *YBSWJ*, 3, 7: 4.
65. Ibid., 3, 7:4.
66. Yi Nai, ‘Zhongguo yi yi ruo wei qiang shuo’ (China should take its weakness as strength) in *Xiangbao leicuan* (Classified compilation of articles from the *Xiangbao*), Feb. 1898-April 1898, Taipei: Datong shuju, 1968, vol. 1, pp. 23–4.
67. Wu Tingfang, *America through the spectacles of an Oriental diplomat*, New York: Stokes, 1914, p. 185, with stylistic changes.
68. The following is based on Tang Caichang, ‘Tongzhongshuo’ (About racial communication) in *Tang Caichang ji* (Works of Tang Caichang), Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980, pp. 100–4.
69. Kang Youwei, *Datongshu* (One World), Beijing: Guji chubanshe, 1956, p. 122.
70. Ibid., p. 118.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid., p. 121.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid., p. 122.
75. Xue Fucheng, *Chushi Ying, Fa, Yi, Bi siguo riji* (Diary in four countries), Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1966–7, p. 28. This part has been deleted in the 1981 edition; Xue Fucheng, *Chushi siguo riji*, Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1981, p. 20; see also p. 14.
76. *Jing* is a traditional term for a fundamental substance maintaining the body; *qi* is the energy of life.
77. Xue, *Siguo riji*, p. 29.
78. Liang Qichao, ‘Dili yu wenming zhi guanxi’ (The relation between geography and civilization) in *YBSWJ*, 4, 10: 106–7.
79. Shu Xincheng, *Jindai Zhongguo liuxue shi* (A history of Chinese students abroad in recent times), Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1933, p. 177.
80. Lou Tseng-Tsiang, *Souvenirs et pensées*, Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1945, p. 44.
81. Ch’en, *China and the West*, p. 166.
82. Ding Wenjiang, *Liang Rengong xiansheng nianpu changbian chugao* (A first draft chronological biography of Liang Qichao), Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1959, p. 15.
83. Tang, *Juedianmingzhai*, pp. 558–62.

84. Ibid., p. 467.
85. Chinese sources, besides contemporary material, also included the *Suishu* (622), the *Liangshu* (629), the *Jinshu* (645), the *Mingshi* (1735), Du You's (732–812) *Tongdian*, Ma Duanlin's *Wenxian tongkao* (1317), Gu Yanwu's (1613–82) *Tianxia junguo libing shu* and Wei Yuan's (1734–1856) *Shengwuji* (1842).
86. Liang Qichao, 'Xixue shu mubiao (zhaize)' (A choice of books to study the West) in Jian Bozan *et al*. (eds), *Wuxu bianfa* (The Hundred Days), Shanghai: Shenzhou guoguang she, 1953, vol. 1, pp. 447–62. A discussion of the complete list of books compiled by Liang can be found in Chen Chi-Yun, 'Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's missionary education: A case study of missionary influence on the reform', *Papers on China*, 16 (1962), pp. 111–14. Chen believes that 'the missionary influence upon Liang Ch'i-ch'ao seemed to be rather indirect'; ibid p. 78.
87. Robert Mackenzie, *The nineteenth century: A history*, London: Nelson, 1889, p. 212.
88. Ibid., pp. 213–14.
89. Henry Wheaton, *Elements of international law*, London: Stevens, 1889, part 1, paragraph 17, line 3, p. 30.
90. See Noriko Kamachi, *Reform in China: Huang Tsun-hsien and the Japanese model*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981, p. 141.
91. Ibid., p. 55.
92. Huang Zunxian, *Renjinglu shicao qianzhu* (Collection of annotated poems by Huang Zunxian), Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1981, p. 238.
93. Ibid., p. 239, n. 4.
94. Ibid., p. 362.
95. Kamachi, *Huang Tsun-hsien*, pp. 15, 141.
96. See however, S. Nagata, *Untersuchungen zum Konservatismus im China des späten 19. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1978, pp. 118–200.
97. Charlton M. Lewis, *Prologue to the Chinese revolution: The transformation of ideas and institutions in Hunan Province, 1891–1907*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University East Asian Research Center, 1976, pp. 64–5.
98. Ye Dehui (ed.), *Yijiao congbian* (Documents of the campaign against the 1898 reform movement), Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1970, p. 442.

4. RACE AS NATION (1903–1915)

1. See Liang Qichao, 'Zhengzhixue dajia Bolunzhili zhi xueshuo' (The doctrine of the great political scientist Bluntschli) in *YBSWJ*, 5, 13: 67–89.
2. Peter J. Bowler, *Evolution: The history of an idea*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p. 267.
3. On this, see James A. Rogers, 'Darwinism and social Darwinism', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 33, no. 2 (1972), pp. 265–80.
4. See Diane B. Paul, 'The selection of the "survival of the fittest"', *Journal of the History of Biology*, 21, no. 3 (Fall 1988), pp. 411–24.
5. Charles R. Darwin, *On the origin of species* (reprint of the 1st edn), with a foreword by C. D. Darlington, London: Watts, 1950, p. 53.
6. Ibid., p. 65.
7. See Linda L. Clark, *Social Darwinism in France*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1984.
8. Hisham B. Sharabi, *Arab intellectuals and the West: The formative years, 1875–1914*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970, p. 69.
9. Albert Hourani, *Arabic thought in the liberal age, 1798–1939*, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 248–50.

10. Adel A. Ziadat, *Western science in the Arab world: The impact of Darwinism*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986, pp. 57–60.
11. Ma Junwu, *Wuzhong yuanshi* (Charles R. Darwin, *On the origin of species*), Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1919. See also R. B. Freeman, 'Darwin in Chinese', *Archives of Natural History*, 13, no. 1 (1986), pp. 19–24, and P. J. P. Whitehead, 'Darwin in Chinese: Some additions', *Archives of Natural History*, 15, no. 1 (1988), pp. 61–2.
12. Mary B. Rankin, *Early Chinese revolutionaries: Radical intellectuals in Shanghai and Chekiang, 1902–1911*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 30.
13. *Changyanbao*, nos 1–8 (July–Sept. 1898), photolithograph, Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1967.
14. See Tang Zhijun, 'Zhang Taiyan de shehuixue' (Zhang Binglin's study of sociology) in Zhang Nianchi (ed.), *Zhang Taiyan shengping yu xueshu* (The life and work of Zhang Binglin), Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1988, pp. 532–42. It is worth noting that Darwin's writings were available in Japanese as early as 1881. Meiji Japan's interpretation of Darwinism was heavily nationalist and also used Darwin as a weapon against Christianity; see Eikoh Shimao, 'Darwinism in Japan', *Annals of Science*, 38 (1981), pp. 93–102.
15. Yan Fu, *Qunxue siyan* (Herbert Spencer, *The study of sociology*), Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1981 (1st edn 1902).
16. Ma Junwu, *Shehuixue yinlun* (A guide to sociology), Shanghai: Xijiang ouhuashe, 1903.
17. Wu Jianchang, *Shehuixue tigang* (An outline of sociology), Shanghai, 1903.
18. Herbert Spencer, *The study of sociology*, London: Williams and Norgate, 1907, p. 53.
19. See Walter M. Simon, 'Herbert Spencer and the social organism', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 21, no. 2 (April–June 1960), p. 299.
20. Stanislaw Andreski, *Herbert Spencer: Structure, function and evolution*, London: Nelson, 1971, p. 28.
21. On Liang Qichao's concept of *qun*, see Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and intellectual transition in China, 1890–1907*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971, pp. 95 ff.
22. Kamachi, *Huang Tsun-hsien*, p. 166.
23. Yan, *Yan Fu shiwen xuan*, p. 15.
24. Ibid., p. 14.
25. Ibid., p. 17.
26. Tang Zhijun (ed.), *Zhang Taiyan zhenglun xuanji* (Selected political writings of Zhang Binglin), Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977, p. 139.
27. See John D. Y. Peel, *Herbert Spencer: The evolution of a sociologist*, London: Heinemann, 1971, pp. 151–2.
28. T. H. Huxley and Julian Huxley, *Evolution and ethics*, London: Pilot Press, 1947, p. 54.
29. See James G. Paradis, *T. H. Huxley: Man's place in nature*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978, pp. 142 ff.
30. Yan Fu, *Tianyanlun* (T. H. Huxley and Julian Huxley, *Evolution and ethics*), Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1981, p. 33.
31. Huxley, *Evolution*, p. 47.
32. On this, see also Hao Xiang, 'Lun Zhongguo jindai zichan jieji zhexue dui jinhualun xueshuo de gaizao' (The transformation of the theory of evolution by bourgeois philosophy in modern China), *Zhongguo zhexue shi yanjiu*, 1 (1988), pp. 79–84.
33. Compare *baozhong jinhua* at p. 5 with *baoqun jinhua* at p. 12; see *baozhong* combined with *hequn* at p. 16, etc., in Yan, *Tianyanlun*.
34. Ibid., pp. 30, 14, and 20.
35. 'Renzu' (Ancestors of mankind), *Jiangsu*, 3 (June 1903), pp. 141–3.
36. On the non-Darwinian theories of evolution in Europe, see Peter J. Bowler, *The non-Darwinian revolution: Reinterpreting a historical myth*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.

37. Collective neurosis about degeneration was of course widespread in Europe too; see Daniel Pick, *Faces of degeneration: A European disorder, c. 1848-c. 1918*, Cambridge University Press, 1989.
38. This section probes the discourse of race among radical students by focusing mainly on three periodicals, *Tides of Zhejiang* (*Zhejiangchao*), *Jiangsu* (*Jiangsu*) and *Hubei Student* (*Hubei xueshengjie*). These are generally considered to have been the most influential of the scores of periodicals published by students in Japan from 1902–11. Other journals, of course, also included numerous articles promoting racial theories. The *Jingshi wenchao* (Literary tides of statecraft) had a special section on race in each issue ('Renzhongbu') from April 1903 onwards. The *Juemin* charted the history of 'human races' Zhong Guang, 'Renzhongshi' (History of human races), *Juemin* (Awake the people), 8 (July 1904); a periodical founded by Hunanese students listed the various origins of humanity and investigated racial differences: 'Wanguo zhongzu yuanshi biao' (Table on the origins of the various nations' races), 'Geguo renzhong leikao' (Study of the types of human races), *Hunan tongsu yanshuohao* (Hunan journal of popular speeches), 12 (Sept. 1903); one of the main vernacular journals included articles on the Yellow Emperor and on racial struggle since ancient times: 'Renzhong' (Human races), 'Huangdi zhuan' (Biography of the Yellow Emperor), 'Pangu yilai zhongzu jingzheng de dashi' (General trend of racial struggles since Pangu), *Zhongguo baihuabao* (The China vernacular), no. 1 (Dec. 1903) *et seq*.; many other examples could be given.
39. For an introduction to the influence of Japan on Chinese radicals, see Marius B. Jansen, 'Japan and the Chinese Revolution of 1911' in Dennis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (eds), *The Cambridge history of China*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, vol. 11, part 2, pp. 339–74.
40. See Robert A. Scalapino and George T. Yu, *Modem China and its revolutionary process: Recurrent challenges to the traditional order, 1850–1920*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, p. 172.
41. The term *minzu* is usually rendered as 'nation', or 'people', but there is an area of overlap with 'tribe' and 'race'. Lexicographic problems were first officially discussed in the 1950s. In 1954, Fan Wenlan published a study arguing that the Han's *minzu* had taken shape as early as the Qin and Han periods. Fan's thesis was the starting point for a series of heated debates on the exact definition of *minzu*. These culminated in a conference in 1962 that examined the use of the term in translations of Marx, Engels and Stalin. It appeared that the German terms *Nation*, *Volk* and *Völkerschaft* as well as the Russian terms *natsia*, *narod* and *narodnost'* had all been translated as *minzu* (Zhang Lu, 'Guanyu "minzu" yici de shiyong he fanyi qingkuang' (About the situation of the use and translation of the term *minzu), Minzu tuanjie*, 7 (July 1962), pp. 34–9). It was implicitly recognised that the term embraced a biological as well as a political meaning. An ill-advised translator, however, had rendered Stalin's *narodnost'* by *buzu*, or 'tribe'. *Natsia*, or *minzu*, was used exclusively to describe a community that had already reached a certain level of 'capitalist development' and of 'political awareness'. The conferees finally agreed upon consistently employing the term *minzu* in all cases, thereby ascribing a political status to all the minorities, whatever their stage of development (on this, see George Moseley, 'China's fresh approach to the national minority question', *The China Quarterly*, 24 (Dec. 1965), pp. 15–27; see also Thomas Heberer, 'Probleme der Nationalitatentheorie und des Natiönsbegriffs in China', *Internationales Asienforum*, 16, nos 1–2 (May 1985), pp. 109–24). Another result of the conferees' terminological inquiry was to reveal a state of confusion between the terms *zhongzu* (race) and *minzu* (nation). Lin Yaohua, in a lengthy article analysing the concept of *minzu*, quoted several contemporary historians who used both terms indiscriminately, and urged social scientists to be more attentive to terminology (Lin Yaohua, 'Guanyu "minzu" yici de shiyong he yiming de wenti' (About the problems of the synonyms and the use of the term *minzu), Lishi yanjiu*, 2 (Feb. 1963), p. 175). His remonstrations had little effect, as historians in the 1970s still used both terms interchangeably (Joshua A. Fogel, 'Race and class in Chinese historiography',

Modern China, 3 (July 1977), p. 351). Such confusion had existed since the adoption of the concept *minzu* from the Japanese (*minzoku*) before 1900. Some researchers have traced the first appearance of the term *minzu* back to Liang Qichao in 1898 (see Jin Tianming and Wang Qingren, '"Minzu" yici lai woguo chuxian ji qi shiyong wenti' (The appearance of the term *minzu* in our country and the problems of its use), *Shehui kexue jikan*, 4 (1981), quoted in Wang Lei, 'The definition of "nation" and the formation of the Han nationality', *Social Sciences in China*, 4, no. 2 (June 1983), p. 167). More recent research goes back to a 1895 issue of the reformist journal *Qiangxuebao* (Han Jinchun and Li Yifu, 'Hanwen "minzu" yici de chuxian ji qi zaoqi shiyong qingkuang' (The first appearance of the term *minzu* in Chinese and the circumstances of its early use), *Minzu yanjiu*, *2* (1984), pp. 36–43). This has been challenged by Peng Yingming, who believes that the reformer Wang Tao first introduced the term from the English in the early 1870s (Peng Yingming, 'Guanyu woguo minzu gainian lishi de chubu kaocha' (Preliminary investigation with respect to the history of the concept of nation in our country), *Minzu yanjiu*, 2 (1985), pp. 5–7).

42. Yuanyun, 'Sike zhenglun' (Four political views), *Zhejiangchao*, 7 (Sept. 1903), p. 43.
43. Zhang Nan and Wang Renzhi, *Xinhai geming qian shinianjian shilun xuanji* (Selected material on debates of the ten years preceding the 1911 Revolution), Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1963, vol. 1, p. 110.
44. *Yunnan*, 1 (Aug. 1906), pp. 7–12.
45. Yuyi, 'Minzuzhuyi lun' (On nationalism), *Zhejiangchao*, 1 (Feb. 1903), p. 3.
46. 'Yindu miewang zhi yuanyin' (The reasons for the extinction of India), *Zhejiangchao*, 1 (Feb. 1903), pp. 4–6.
47. Feisheng, 'Eren zhi xingzhi' (The Russians' nature), *Zhejiangchao*, 1 (Feb. 1903), pp. 4–5, 2 (March 1903), pp. 77–9.
48. Taosheng, 'Haishang de Meiren' (The Americans on the sea), *Zhejiangchao*, 6 (Aug. 1903), p. 2.
49. See, for instance, Shulou, 'Jiaoyuhui wei mintuan zhi jichu' (Education associations as a foundation for civil corps), *Jiangsu*, 1 (April 1903), pp. 13–19.
50. Lincang, 'Tiexuezhuyi zhi jiaoyu' (Iron-blooded education), *Zhejiangchao*, 10 (Dec. 1903), pp. 64–6.
51. Ye Xuesheng, 'Zhongguo kaifang lun' (About the opening of China), *Zhejiangchao*, 6 (Aug. 1903), pp. 1–12.
52. Bolin, 'Tiyu' (Physical education), *Yunnan*, 1 (Aug. 1906), p. 40; on this theme, see also Andrew Morris, '"To make the four hundred million move": The late Qing dynasty origins of modern Chinese sport and physical culture', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 42, No. 4 (Oct. 2000), pp. 876–906.
53. Review of *Tiyuxue* (Physical education), *Zhejiangchao*, 4 (May 1903), p. 18a.
54. 'Xing yixue tong' (On promoting medicine), *Hubei xueshengjie*, 2 (Feb. 1903), pp. 61–72.
55. *Jiangsu*, 4 (July 1903), p. 144.
56. On anti-Manchuism before the 1911 revolution, see Li Liangyu, 'Xinhai geming shiqi de paiman sixiang' (Anti-Manchuism during the 1911 Revolution), *Nanjing daxue xuebao*, 2 (1989), pp. 67–77.
57. Yalu, 'Zheng Chenggong zhuan' (A biography of Zheng Chenggong), *Jiangsu*, 4 (July 1903), pp. 70–1.
58. 'Huanghuo yuce' (Forecast of the yellow peril), *Jiangsu*, 1 (April 1903), pp. 103–7, based on a Japanese article.
59. Zhang Zhaotong, review of *Weilai shijie lun* (About the future world), *Jiangsu*, 3 (June 1903), p. 20a.
60. Zhongkan, 'Zizhipian' (On self-government), *Zhejiangchao*, 6 (Aug. 1903), p. 2.
61. *Hubei xueshengjie*, 2 (Feb. 1903), pp. 135–6.

62. ‘Tong ding tong’ (Sorrow calms the sorrow), *Jiangsu*, 3 (June 1903), p. 124. *Chanchanbotsu* is an onomatopoeia associated with the slight ringing sound produced by glasses or coins striking together: chink. I am indebted to C. A. Bois for this information.
63. *Zhejiangchao*, 2 (March 1903), p. 134.
64. ‘Wuhu youtai’ (Alas the Jew), *Zhejiangchao*, 7 (Sept. 1903), p. 165; the reformers also lamented the Jews; see for instance ‘Youtairen zhi canzhuang’ (The miserable condition of the Jew), *Xinmin congbao*, 20 (1903).
65. Ch’en, *China and the West*, p. 160.
66. Sidney Shapiro, *Jews in old China: Studies by Chinese scholars*, New York: Hippocrene Books, 1984, p. 160. Compare this recent statement with the writings of Wu, presented in the next chapter. On the images of the ‘Jew’ in China, see Zhou Xun, *Chinese perceptions of the ‘Jew’ and Judaism: A history of the* Youtai, London: Curzon, 2001.
67. Michael Gasster, ‘The Republican revolutionary movement’ in Dennis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (eds), *The Cambridge history of China*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, vol. 11, part 2, p. 497.
68. ‘Qiguai renzhong’ (A strange race of men), *Zhejiangchao*, 9 (Nov. 1903), p. 113.
69. ‘Shijie geguo bingshi shenti zhi changduan’ (Comparative height of soldiers from different countries of the world), *Youxue yibian*, 3 (Jan. 1903), pp. 276–7.
70. ‘Heiren zhi baifen’ (The black’s white powder), *Zhejiangchao*, 7 (Sept. 1903), p. 172.
71. ‘Heinu xuexiao’ (Schools for the black slaves), *Jiangsu*, 7 (Oct. 1903), p. 168.
72. For instance in *Jiangsu*, 3 (1903), *Ershi shiji zhi Zhina*, 1 (June 1905), *Minbao*, 1 (Nov. 1905), and others. The opening issue of the *Minbao* proclaimed that the Yellow Emperor was ‘the first great nationalist of the world’.
73. Liu Shipei, ‘Huangdi jinian shuo’ (About a calendar based on the Yellow Emperor), *Huangdi hun* (The soul of the Yellow Emperor), 1904, p. 1; reprinted, Taipei: Zhonghua minguo shiliao congbian, 1968.
74. Gu Jiegang, ‘Huangdi’ (Yellow Emperor) in *Shilin zashi* (Miscellaneous historical studies), Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1963, pp. 176–84.
75. Zhang Qiyun, ‘Huangdi zisun’ (Sons of the Yellow Emperor, speech given during the National Festival of Grave Sweeping, 5 April 1941) in *Minzu sixiang* (Nationalist thought), Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1951, p. 1. Another scholarly contribution to the myth of the Yellow Emperor is Qian Mu, *Huangdi* (The Yellow Emperor), Taipei: Dongda tushu youxian gongsi, 1944 (reprinted, 1987). The religion of the Yellow Emperor was formally established in Taiwan in March 1957 with government approval; see Christian Joachim, ‘Flowers, fruit, and incense only: Elite versus popular in Taiwan’s religion of the Yellow Emperor’, *Modern China*, 16, no. 1 (Jan. 1990), p. 7.
76. On Chen Tianhua, see Ernst P. Young, ‘Ch’en T’ien-hua (1875–1905): A Chinese nationalist’, *Papers on China*, 13 (1959), pp. 113–62.
77. Chen Tianhua, *Chen Tianhua ji* (Collected works of Chen Tianhua), Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1982, p. 82.
78. Ibid., p. 81.
79. Tsou Jung, *The revolutionary army: A Chinese nationalist tract of 1903*, intro. and transl. by John Lust, Paris: Mouton, 1968, p. 72.
80. Ibid., p. 106.
81. Ibid., p. 109.
82. Ibid., p. 80.
83. Ibid., pp. 106–7.
84. Ibid., p. 106.
85. Liu Yazi, in Zhang and Wang, *Xinhai geming*, vol. 2, p. 813.

86. Jiang Guanyun, 'Zhongguo renzhong kao' (Inquiry into the Chinese race), *Xinmin congbao*, 38–9 (Oct. 1903) to 60 (Jan. 1905).
87. The following is based on Albert Etienne Jean-Baptiste Terrien de Lacouperie, *Western origins of the early Chinese civilisation from 2300 B.C. to 200 A.D.*, London: Asher, 1894.
88. *Guocui xuebao*, 6 (1904), p. 3b.
89. See Laurence A. Schneider, 'National essence and the new intelligentsia' in Furth (ed.), *The limits of change*, p. 66.
90. One of the most thoughtful introductions to Zhang Binglin is Wang Fansen, *Zhang Taiyan de sixiang (1868–1919) ji qi dui ruxue chuantong de chongji* (Zhang Binglin's thought from 1868 to 1919 and his attack on the Confucian tradition), Taipei: Shibao wenhua chuban shiye youxian gongsi, 1985. Shimada Kenji's *Pioneer of the Chinese revolution: Zhang Binglin and Confucianism*, Stanford University Press, 1990, is invaluable. See also Chang Hao, *Chinese intellectuals in crisis: Search for order and meaning, 1890–1911*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987, and Charlotte Furth, 'The sage as rebel: The inner world of Chang Ping-lin' in Furth (ed.), *The limits of change*, pp. 113–50.
91. See Kondō Kuniyasu, 'Shō Heiren ni okeru kakumei shisō no keisei' (On the formation of Zhang Binglin's revolutionary thought), *Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo kiyō*, no. 28 (March 1962), pp. 207–24. From 1898 onwards, this concern was gradually superseded by violent anti-Manchuism. As emphasised in the introduction, this study is not concerned with representations of minority people in China. For an introduction to Zhang Binglin's anti-Manchu thought, see Onogawa Hidemi's 'Zhang Binglin de paiman sixiang' (Zhang Binglin's anti-Manchu thought), *Dalu zazhi*, 44, no. 3 (March 1972), pp. 39–60. For a study that refutes the importance of Zhang's racial theories and anti-Manchu thought, see Wong Young-tsu, *Search for modern nationalism: Zhang Binglin and revolutionary China, 1869–1936*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1989. See also Kauko Laitinen, *Chinese nationalism in the late Qing dynasty: Zhang Binglin as an anti-Manchu propagandist*, London: Curzon Press, 1990.
92. Zhang Binglin, *Qiushu* (Book of raillery), Shanghai: Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1958, pp. 41–56.
93. Ibid., p. 38.
94. See for instance Zhang Binglin, 'Menggu shengshuai lun' (About the rise and fall of the Mongols), *Changyanbao*, 9 (Sept. 1898), p. la.
95. On Zhang's concept of evolution, see also Wang Yu, 'Zhang Taiyan jinhuaguan pingxi' (An appraisal of Zhang Binglin's view of evolution) in Zhang, *Zhang Taiyan*, pp. 232–99.
96. Zhang Binglin, 'Lun xuehui you yi yu huangren ji yi baohu' (About the benefit of study societies for the yellows and that they should urgently be protected), *Shiwubao*, 19 (March 1897).
97. Zhang, *Qiushu*, p. 38.
98. Ibid., pp. 41, 38 and 58.
99. I do not intend in this section to discuss the Tongmenghui nationalists and other 1911 revolutionaries who have already been treated at considerable length elsewhere. It will suffice here to indicate the connection between race and nation in the writings of Sun Yatsen.
100. Lyon Sharman, *Sun Yat-sen, his life and its meaning*, Stanford University Press, 1968, p. 288.
101. See A. James Gregor, 'National-fascismo and the revolutionary nationalism of Sun Yatsen', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 39, no. 1 (Nov. 1979), pp. 21–37.
102. Sun Wen (Sun Yatsen), *Sanminzhuyi* (The three principles), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1927, pp. 4–5; this translation follows Frank W. Price, *San min chu i: The Three Principles of the People*, Shanghai: China Committee, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1927, pp. 11–12.
103. See Kobayashi Toshihiko, 'Sun Yatsen and Asianism: A positivist approach' in John Y. Wong (ed.), *Sun Yatsen: His international ideas and international connections, with special emphasis on their relevance today*, Sydney: Wild Peony, 1987, pp. 15–37.

104. Sun, *Sanminzhuyi*, pp. 4–5; Price, *San min chu i*, pp. 8–9.

5. RACE AS SPECIES (1915–1949)

1. Marie-Claire Bergère, *The golden age of the Chinese bourgeoisie, 1911–1937*, Cambridge University Press, 1989.
2. Chen Duxiu, 'Dong Xi minzu genben sixiang zhi chayi' (Fundamental differences in thought between the peoples of the East and the West) in *Chen Duxiu wenji*, Shanghai: Yadong tushuguan, 1922, pp. 57–62.
3. On these developments, see Frank Dikötter, *The age of openness: China before Mao*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.
4. Lin Yutang, *A history of the press and public opinion in China*, London: Oxford University Press, 1933, p. 122; on the modern press one should also read Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese print capitalism, 1876–1937*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004.
5. See Jean-Pierre Drège, *La Commercial Press de Shanghai, 1897–1949*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1978, pp. 54–5.
6. On the academic community in Republican China, see E-tu Zen Sun, 'The growth of the academic community 1912–1949' in John K. Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker (eds), *The Cambridge history of China*, vol. 13, part 2, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 361–420.
7. Both quotations are taken from Charles W. Hayford, *To the people: James Yen and village China*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1990, p. 12.
8. Wei Juxian, 'Zhongguo minzu qiantu zhi shi de kaocha' (Study on the future of the Chinese race), *Qiantu*, 1, no. 10 (Oct. 1933), p. 7.
9. A circumspect comment on Wei's methodological approach appeared in the same journal five months later. The author, Wang Boping, cautiously referred to Wei's abuse of mythology, his unhistorical methods of analysis and his partiality; see Wang Boping, 'Zai lun Zhongguo minzu qiyuan wenti' (Revisiting the question of the origins of the Chinese race), *Qiantu*, 2, no. 3 (March 1934).
10. This paragraph is based on Li Chi, *The formation of the Chinese people: An anthropological inquiry*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928.
11. Lin Yan, *Zhongguo minzu de youlai* (Origins of the Chinese race), Shanghai: Yongxiang yinshuguan, 1947, p. 27.
12. The following is based on Zhang Junjun, *Zhongguo minzu zhi gaizao* (The reform of the Chinese race), Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1935. See also his *Zhongguo minzu zhi gaizao, xubian* (Sequel to the reform of the Chinese race), Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1936.
13. Liang Boqiang, 'Yixueshang Zhongguo minzu zhi yanjiu' (Medical research on the Chinese race), *Dongfang zazhi*, 23, no. 13 (July 1926), pp. 93 and 98. Liang equated the 'Chinese nation' with the 'Han race'.
14. Laurence A. Schneider, *Ku Chieh-kang and China's new history*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971, p. 164.
15. Lin Yutang, *My country and my people*, New York: John Ray, 1935, p. 27.
16. Chen's work was republished eight times, and was reprinted in Taiwan in 1971 as part of a series of scientific books for young people. The book was described on the back cover of this reprint as the most illuminating work ever written on anthropology by a Chinese scientist. Chen Yinghuang, *Renleixue* (Anthropology), Taipei: Xueren yuekan zazhi she, 1971.
17. Chen Yinghuang, *Renleixue* (Anthropology), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan (1st edn 1918), 1928, p. 5.
18. Ibid., p. 81.

19. Xue Deyu, *Renti shengli weishengxue tiyao* (Precis of human physiological health science), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1921, p. 14.
20. Gong Tingzhang, *Renlei yu wenhua jinbu shi* (History of the progress of mankind and culture), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1926, pp. 54–66.
21. Zhu Xi, *Women de zuxian* (Our ancestors), Shanghai: Wenhua shenghuo chubanshe, 1940, pp. 226, 252.
22. Chen, *Renleixue*, pp. 66–9.
23. Zhang Zuoren, *Renlei tianyan shi* (History of human evolution), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1930, pp. 51–2.
24. You Jiade, *Renlei qiyuan* (Origins of mankind), Shanghai: Shijie shuju, 1929, p. 7.
25. Lin, *My country*, p. 40.
26. Gong, *Renlei*, p. 11.
27. Zhu Weiji, *Shengwu de jinhua* (Evolution of organisms), Shanghai: Yongxiang yinshuguan, 1948 (1st edn 1945), p. 72.
28. Zhang Ziping, *Hekeer* (Haeckel), Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1934.
29. Zhang Ziping, *Renwen dilixue* (Human geography), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1926 (1st edn 1924), pp. 32, 34.
30. Zhang Ziping, *Renlei jinhualun* (The theory of human evolution), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1930, pp. 84, 74.
31. Lin, *My country*, p. 26.
32. The following draws freely on Frank Dikötter, 'La représentation du Japon et des Japonais dans la caricature chinoise (1923–1937)', unpubl. MA thesis, Dept. of History, University of Geneva, 1985.
33. Wu Dingliang, 'On metopism of Chinese skulls and its relation to the size of cranial measurements', *Renleixue jikan*, 1 (Collected papers on anthropology), Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 1941, vol. 2, pp. 84–6.
34. Zhang Liyuan, *Renleixue dayi* (Main points of anthropology), Shanghai: Shenzhou guoguangshe, 1931, p. 19.
35. Zhang Junjun, *Minzu suzhi zhi gaizao* (The reform of the race's quality), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1943, p. 34.
36. Lu Zhiwei's results originally appeared in the *Shehui xinli zazhi*, 2 (1931), pp. 402–8.
37. Tong Runzhi, 'Zhongguo minzu de zhili' (The intelligence of the Chinese race), *Dongfang zazhi*, 26, no. 3 (Feb. 1929), pp. 67–74.
38. Chen Jianshan, *Renlei naosui zhi jinhua* (The evolution of the human brain), Shanghai: Zhengzhong shuju, 1947, p. 76.
39. Chen Yucang, *Renti de yanjiu* (Research on the human body), Shanghai: Zhengzhong shuju, 1937, p. 180.
40. Jiang Xiangqing, *Renti celiangxue* (The science of body measurements), Shanghai: Qinfen shuju, 1935, pp. 97–8.
41. Lin, *My country*, pp. 78 and 80.
42. Nancy Stepan, *The idea of race in science: Great Britain, 1800–1960*, London: Macmillan, 1982, p. 15; for the common association of Africans with apes, see pp. 15–18.
43. Keith Thomas, *Man and the natural world: Changing attitudes in England, 1500–1800*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984, pp. 134–5.
44. Gu, *Renleixue*, p. 51. Gu Shoubai published a second slim volume on anthropology the same year; Gu Shoubai, *Renleixue* (Anthropology), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1924.
45. Gong, *Renlei*, p. 53.
46. Chen Jianshan, 'Shi renlei' (Explaining mankind), *Minduo zazhi*, 5, no. 1 (March 1924), p. 7.
47. Chen Darong, *Dongwu yu rensheng* (Animals and life), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1928 (1st edn 1916), pp. 8–13. The author thus echoed the 'polyphyletic theory', first expounded by

Carl Vogt in 1865, in which a different anthropoid ape was identified for each human race; see Léon Poliakov, *Le mythe aryen. Essai sur les sources du racisme et des nationalismes*, Bruxelles: Editions Complexe, 1987, p. 316.

48. Anonymous, *Renzhongxue* (Anthropology), n.d., pp. 36–8.
49. Gu, *Renleixue*, pp. 51, 41, 65, 67, 68.
50. Du Yaquan *et al*. (eds), *Dongwuxue da cidian* (Great dictionary of zoology), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1927 (1st edn 1923), p. 15.
51. Liu Huru, *Rensheng dili gaiyao* (General principles of human geography), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1931, pp. 47–8.
52. Zhou, *Renlei*, p. 45.
53. Anonymous, *Renzhongxue*, p. 33.
54. Du, *Dongwuxue*, p. 17.
55. Zhou, *Renlei*, p. 29.
56. Zhu, *Women de zuxian*, p. 225.
57. Chen Duo *et al*. (eds), *Riyong baike quanshu* (Daily encyclopedia), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1919, part 3, pp. 93–6. See also Huang Shaoxu *et al*. (eds), *Riyong baike quanshu* (Daily encyclopedia), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1934, pp. 183–7.
58. Li Xuezeng, *Yazhou zhongzu dili* (Racial geography of Asia), Shanghai: Zhengzhong shuju, 1947, p. 10.
59. *Rensheng dilixue* (Human geography), Shanghai: Qunyi shuju, 1907, pp. 147–9.
60. The sticker may be observed by slowly passing a finger over the illustration; the original picture becomes visible when the page is held against the light.
61. Fu Yunsen, *Renwen dili* (Human geography), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1914, pp. 9–15.
62. Léon Wieger, *Moralisme officiel des écoles, en 1920*, Hien-hien, 1921, p. 180, original Chinese text.
63. Cao Bohan, *Shijie dili gangyao* (Essentials of world geography), Shanghai: Dongnan chubanshe, 1943, pp. 4–5; see also Cao Bohan, *Shijie dili chubu* (Elementary world geography), Shanghai: Shenghuo shudian, 1948, pp. 6–7. Both were standard schoolbooks.
64. 'Anti-foreign teachings in text-books of China', supplement to the *International Gleanings from Japan*, no. 16 (Oct. 1932), Tokyo: Sokokusha, p. 12.
65. Wu Zelin, *Xiandai zhongzu* (Contemporary races), Shanghai: Xinyue shudian, 1932, pp. 2–3.
66. Frederick Hung (Hong Yuan), 'Racial superiority and inferiority complex', *The China Critic*, 9 Jan. 1930, p. 29.
67. Lu Xinqiu, *Jinhua yichuan yu yousheng* (Evolutionary heredity and eugenics), Shanghai: Zhongguo kexue tushu yiqi gongsi, 1949, p. 42.
68. Huang Wenshan, 'Fuxing Zhonghua minzu de jiben yuanze' (Fundamental principles for reviving the Chinese nation) in *Minzu zhi shang lun* (On the supremacy of the nation), Hankou: Duli chubanshe, 1938, p. 52; see also Huang Wenshan's 'Zhongzuzhuyi lun' (About racism) in *Huang Wenshan xueshu luncong* (Collected studies on society), Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1959, pp. 225–54, first published in 1942. It may be noted that Huang, a professor at Lingnan University, was one of the ten signatories of the notorious 'Manifesto on Cultural Construction on a Chinese Base', published in 1934, which criticised the 'westernising tendencies' of the New Culture Movement and called for study of the country's cultural heritage.
69. Tao Menghe, 'Zhongzu wenti' (Racial problems), *Xiandai pinglun*, 3, no. 63 (Feb. 1926), p. 208.
70. Wu Zelin and Ye Shaochun, *Shijie renkou wenti* (Problems of the world population), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1938, p. 84.
71. Zhou, *Renlei*, p. 61.
72. Hu Huanyong, *Shijie dili* (World geography), Shanghai: Zhengzhong shuju, 6th edn 1947 (1st edn 1942), pp. 43–4.

73. Li Zongwu, *Renwen dili ABC* (ABC of human geography), Shanghai: Shijie shuju, 1929, p. 24.
74. Wu and Ye, *Shijie renkou*, p. 92.
75. E. U. Essien-Udom, *Black nationalism: The rise of the black Muslims in U.S.A.*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966, p. 40.
76. On the theme of alienation, see Jerome Ch'en, 'Yiguo, "yihua": liangci dazhan jian Yingyu guojia Zhongguo liuxuesheng taidu he xingwei de bianqian' (Estrangement in strange lands: Attitudinal and behavioural changes of Chinese students in English-speaking countries between the two world wars), manuscript presented at the Institute of Modern History, Beijing, Summer 1990. See also his *China and the West*, pp. 151–72.
77. Hsu Kai-yu, *Wen I-to*, Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980, p. 61.
78. Wen Yiduo, *Wen Yiduo quanji* (Complete works of Wen Yiduo), Hong Kong: Yuandong tushu gongsi, 1968, vol. 1, p. 40.
79. Wen Yiduo, 'Wo shi Zhongguoren' (I am Chinese), *Xiandai pinglun*, 2, no. 33 (July 1925), pp. 136–7.
80. Lu Xun, *Selected writings*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980, vol. 4, p. 149.
81. Huang Zhenxia, 'Huangren zhi xue' (Blood of the yellow race), *Qianfeng yuekan* (Vanguard monthly), 1, no. 7 (July 1931), p. 6; for this translation I have relied on Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (transl.), Lu Xun, *Selected writings*, vol. 3, pp. 146–7.
82. Pan Guangdan, review of Donald Young (ed.), *The american negro* (1928), *The China Critic*, 28 Aug. 1930, p. 838.
83. R. D. Arkush, *Fei Xiaotong and sociology in revolutionary China*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981, pp. 37–46.
84. Zhang Junmai, *Minzu fuxing zhi xueshu jichu* (The scientific foundations for national revival), Beijing: Zaishengshe, 1935, pp. 10, 22.
85. Qi Sihe, 'Zhongzu yu minzu' (Race and nationality), *Yugong*, 7, nos 1–3 (April 1937), pp. 25–34.
86. See 'Class, nation, and race' in Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the origins of Chinese Marxism*, New York: Atheneum, 1970, pp. 188–94.

6. RACE AS SEED (1915–1949)

1. Parts of this chapter have been published as Frank Dikötter, 'Eugenics in Republican China', *Republican China*, 15, no. 1 (Nov. 1989), pp. 1–17.
2. The following is based on Zhang Binglun, 'Researches in heredity and breeding' in *Ancient China's technology and science*, Institute of the History of Natural Sciences (ed.), Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1983, pp. 281–91. See also Donald Leslie, 'Early Chinese ideas on heredity', *Asiatische Studien*, 1 (1953), pp. 26–46.
3. Wan Quan, *Youke fahui* (Exposition of medicine for infants), orig. 1549, Beijing: Renmin weisheng chubanshe, 1963, p. 4.
4. *Zhong* is equivalent to *giông* in Vietnamese, *chùng* in Sino-Vietnamese, *shu* in Japanese, and *chong* in Korean.
5. Zhulinsi sengren, *Zhulinsi nüke erzhong* (Two texts on medicine for women by the Bamboo Grove monastery), orig. 1786, Beijing: Zhongyi guji chubanshe, 1993, p. 293.
6. Angela K. Leung, 'Autour de la naissance: La mère et l'enfant en Chine aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles', *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, 76 (Jan.-June 1984), pp. 53, 56 and 64. See also Charlotte Furth, 'Concepts of pregnancy, childbirth, and infancy in Ch'ing dynasty China', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 46, no. 1 (Feb. 1987), pp. 7–35, and Charlotte Furth, 'Blood, body and gender: Medical images of the female condition in China, 1600–1850', *Chinese Science*, 7 (Dec. 1986), pp. 43–66; a comprehensive analysis of ideas around pregnancy and childbirth, on which the first section of this chapter is based, appears in Frank Dikötter, *Imperfect*

conceptions: Medical knowledge, birth defects and eugenics in China, London: Hurst; New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

7. Yu Tan, *Xishang futan* (Talks on the mat), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936, p. 16.
8. Yongsitang zhuren, *Taichan hebi* (Two books on childbirth), orig. 1862 edn., *juan* 1, p. 3ab.
9. Wan Quan, *Wan shi furenke* (Wan Quan's medicine for women), Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 1983, p. 21.
10. Yan Chunxi, *Taichan xinfa* (Personal experience in childbirth), orig. 1730, 1824 edn., *juan* 1, 10b-11a; on Yan Chunxi, see Guo Junshuang and Tian Daihua, 'Yan Chunxi yu *Taichan xinfa*' (Yan Chunxi and his book on childbirth), *Zhonghua yishi zazhi*, 1990, 20, no. 3, pp. 180–3.
11. Yan Yuan, *Preservation of Learning* (*Cunxuebian*), translated with an introduction on his life and thought by Mansfield Freeman, Los Angeles: Monumenta Serica, 1972, p. 30.
12. Xu Guangqi, *Nongzheng quanshu jiaozhu* (Complete book on agricultural management with annotations), Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1979, p. 90.
13. On demographic thought in late imperial China, see Frank Dikötter, *Sex, culture and modernity in China: Medical science and the construction of sexual identities in the early Republican period*, London: Hurst; Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press; Hong Kong University Press, 1995, pp. 102–21.
14. Tang Peng, 'Yi pin' (To cure poverty) in *Fu Qiuzi* (Works of Tang Peng), Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1987, pp. 313–19.
15. Qi Sihe (ed.), *Huang Juezi zoushu—Xu Naiji zouyi: hekan* (Combined publication of the memorials of Huang Juezi and Xu Naiji), Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959, pp. 216–19.
16. Wu Shenyuan, '"Renman zhi huan": Jindai Zhongguo renkou sixiang de "redian"' (The peril of overpopulation: A 'hot point' in modern Chinese demographic thought), *Renkouxue*, 1987, no. 3, pp. 92–3.
17. Xu Zi, *Weihuizhai wenji* (Collected writings of Xu Zi), Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1970, p. 28.
18. Frank Dikötter, 'The limits of benevolence: Wang Shiduo (1802–1889) and population control', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 55, no. 1 (Feb. 1992), pp. 110–15.
19. Wang Shiduo, *Wang Huiweng yibing riji* (Diary of Wang Shiduo), Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1967, p. 145.
20. Tan Sitong, *Tan Sitong quanji* (Collected writings of Tan Sitong), Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981, p. 366.
21. Liang Qichao, 'Nanhai Kang xiansheng zhuan' (Biography of Kang Youwei) in *Yinbingshi wenji* (Complete works of Liang Qichao), Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1941, 3, 6: 78.
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82. Chen Ta, *Population in modern China*, New York: Octagon Books, 1974, pp. 76–7.
83. Zhang Junjun, *Zhongguo minzu*, p. 266. Three separate translations of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* had been published in China by 1935. Many biographies of Hitler and books on National Socialism were published until the 1940s. The reception and interpretation of German Nazism and Italian Fascism in China from the 1930s onwards would undoubtedly be a fruitful and revealing research topic.
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7. RACE AS NATIONALITY (1949–2012)

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Abbreviations

DFZZ	*Dongfang zazhi*
FNZZ	*Funü zazhi*
XDPL	*Xiandai pinglun*
YBSWJ	Liang Qichao, *Yinbingshi wenji*
YBSZJ	Liang Qichao, *Yinbingshi zhuanji*
YPZZ	A Ying, *Yapian zhanzheng wenxue*

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INDEX

Abelard of Bath, 81
abortion, 107, 131, 134
Abyssinia, *see* Ethiopia
Acta Anthropologica Sinica, x, 128, 130
Adam, ancestor of humankind, 20, 44
Africa, ix, x, 6, 10, 32, 33, 41, 46, 56, 57, 58, 87, 93–4, 95, 126
Africans in China, x, 126, 134–5
  racial abuse, x, 134–5
  riots against, x, 134
African-Americans, x, 46, 47, 50–1, 98, 135
Age of Great Peace, 2, 54
Agricultural Experimental Ground, 89
'agricultural war', 42
Ainu people, 88
d'Albuquerque, Affonso, 8
alcoholism, 110
Aleni, Giulio, 29
alienation, 40
American Indians, *see* Native Americans
America, *see* United States
Analects, 50
anatomy, 27–31
  see also physiology
ancestor worship, 19, 27, 73, 78
  see also Yellow Emperor
Andaman islands, 9
Andreski, Stanislaw, 65
Anglo-Saxons, 51, 52
anthropology, x, xv, 35, 47, 72, 81–101, 108, 123, 129–30
anthropometry, x, 100–1, 123, 128
  see also body measurements, craniology
anti-Buddhism, 12–14
anti-Christianism, 28–9, 30, 44
anti-Manchuism, 17–20, 24, 61, 70
anti-rightist campaign (1957), 123
anti-Semitism, 72, 103, 120
  see also Jews
anxiety, 60, 68, 121
  see also alienation, humiliation resentment
apartheid, 126
  see also segregation
archaeology, 83, 85, 129

Arabs, ix, 9, 34, 57
armed battles (*xiedou*), 43
Aryan ‘race’, 4, 51, 83
Australia, 32
  aboriginal people, 50, 88, 94
  future colony of the yellow race, 51
Australoid ‘race’, 95–6
autonomy, 124–5

Babylon, 75, 109
baihua (vernacular), 62, 80
Bak Sings, 75
Bao Shichen, 27
baozhong (preservation of the race), 46, 60, 64, 73, 111
barbarians, xiv, xv, 2–20, 24, 32, 125
  ‘raw’ and ‘cooked’, 7, 89, 94
  see also food, slaves
Barcata, Louis, 125
Barrett, Timothy, 25
Bath, Abelard of, 81
Batu Khan, 99
beard, *see* hair
Beijing, 79, 126, 132, 134
Beijing International University, 98
Beijing Man, xiii, 85, 129
Beijing National University, 98
Beijing Normal University, 87, 109
Beijing University, 86, 131
Bengal, 10
  see also India
Berger, Peter, 24
Bernier, François, 34
bestial nature of outsiders, xv, 3, 5, 16, 76, 88–91
Bible, 19, 44
bigenism, 45
  see also monogenism, polygenism
Binchun, 33, 34
birthrates, 106–7, 110, 117, 119, 131–4
Bixie jishi, 30
black skin, 8–9, 10–12, 87
  peasants, 8–9
black ‘race’, 8–9, 50–1, 56, 59–60, 72, 87, 129
  ability to group, 67
  odour of, 56
  perceived as ape-like, 72, 93–4
  perceived as stupid, 50, 57, 92
  sex-drive of, 135
  slaves, ix, 7, 11, 26, 32, 41, 59–60, 72, 87, 93–4 turn white, 87
black-headed people, 8–9, 75
blood, 11, 30, 50, 72, 76, 78, 84–7, 101, 104–5, 108, 113, 117

infusion, 86
type, 85–6
‘Blood of the Yellow Race’, 99–100
Blumenbach, Johann, vii, 47, 95
Boas, Franz, 91
Bocarra, Antonio, 11
body measurements, x, 84, 91, 100–1, 123, 128, 155
Book of Martyrs (Foxe), 19
Book of the Tang, 9
botany, 55, 104
bourgeoisie, 99
see also social classes
Bowler, Peter, 62
brain measurements, 91–2, 94
see also craniology, IQ tests
Brazil, 110
Brinton, Daniel, 95
Britain, 10, 22, 25–7, 28, 55, 56, 87, 89, 97
and eugenics, 110, 111
Opium Wars, 21–3, 27, 29, 30, 33, 35
Buchner, Ludwig, 64
Buddhism, 8, 12–14, 17, 20, 31, 39, 40, 48, 55, 68, 76
and Taiping, 24
Pure Land, 68
Yogacara, 76
see also anti-Buddhism
Burma, 32, 53, 57, 94

Cai Yuanpei, 119
calendar, 73
Camper, Peter, 93
Canada, 97
Canary Islands, 96
cannibalism, 9, 94, 100
Canton, ix, 7, 9, 11, 25, 29, 31, 55, 79, 87
caricatures, 82, 90–1
del Carpini, Pian, 34
castration, 118, 119
categorical thinking, 49–50
category (*lei*), 18
Caucasian ‘race’, 45, 47, 48, 83, 91, 93, 98, 100, 128
Celtic ‘race’, 52
Ceylon, 9, 29, 33, 57
Cixi, 39
Chiang Kaishek, 127
Ch’en, Jerome, 57
Cham people, 9
Chen Changheng, 109, 111, 119
Chen Da, 100, 116–17, 119
Chen Duxiu, 80

Chen Jianshan, 92, 94
Chen Liang, 14–15
Chen Lifu, 119
Chen Lunjiong, 31
Chen Muhua, 132
Chen Tianbiao, 116
Chen Tianhua, 73
Chen Xiang, 12
Chen Yinghuang, 86, 88–9, 108
Chen Yucang, 92
Cheng Yinghong, 134
Chesterton, Gilbert Keith, 117
childbirth, 89, 104–6, 108, 120, 131–4
  see also birthrates
chimpanzees, 94
China's Destiny, 127
Chinese Civil War (1945–1949), 119
Chinese Committee for Racial Hygiene, 114
Chinese Communist Party, x, xiv, 27, 83, 89, 101, 119, 122, 123–7
Chinese Eugenics Institute, 112
Christianity, 4, 19, 22, 24, 28–9, 30, 31, 44, 47, 58, 93, 106
chromosome theory, 123
Chunqiu, 2, 16, 19
  and skin colour, 9
Churchill, Winston, 103
class prejudice, 111–12, 114, 117, 121, 131
  see also social classes
classics, 2–5, 6, 12, 17, 20, 44, 59, 80–1, 118
Cole, James, 50
colour
  perception of, 35
  symbolism, 8, 9, 34, 35, 49
Columbia University, 85, 100
Commercial Press, 82, 87, 90, 93–4, 109, 111
commercial war (*shangzhan*), 42
Committee for the Study of Population Policies, 119
Communism, x, xiv, 27, 83, 89, 101, 119, 122, 123–7
compradors (*maiban*), 37
concubines, 105, 113, 131
Confucianism, 1–3, 7, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 20, 35, 39–40, 48, 59, 60, 68, 73, 78–81, 107, 115
  Analects, 50
  kaozhengxue (evidential research), 21
  Kongzi gaizhi kao, 81
  Neo-Confucianism, 14, 21
  New Text, 21–2, 29, 39, 40, 58
  Yin and Yang, 6, 49
  see also classics, *jingshi*
congshu (Self-study series), 82, 87, 90
conservatives, 38, 60, 80, 83, 106, 127
continents, 4, 20, 31–2, 47–9, 95 *see also* geography

cosmology, 4, 22, 24, 27, 41, 48, 65–7, 96, 107
craniology, 84, 90, 91, 95, 129 *see also* anthropometry, body measurements, phrenology
Crossley, Pamela Kyle, 23
Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), 125, 135
cultural universalism, 3, 12, 14, 15, 20
rejection of, 12, 15, 19

Daoism, ix, 5, 7, 13, 16, 25, 108
Dartmouth College, 100, 112
Darwin, Charles, 24, 41, 62–8, 88, 103
On the Origin of Species, 62–3
Descent of Man, *The*, 63
translations of, 64, 68
see also evolution, neo-Lamarckism
Darwin, Leonard, 109
datong (‘One World’, ‘great community’), 2, 55, 60, 71, 87, 108
Datongshu (One World), 55
Davenport, Charles, 109
deformities, 5, 105–7, 131
degeneration, 68, 71, 85, 86, 109, 115, 117
see also evolution
dehumanisation, xv, 3, 5–6, 25, 88–91
see also bestial nature of outsiders
demography, 106–7
Deng Mu, 16
Deng Xiaoping, 127, 130
Denmark, 132
Descent of Man, *The* (Darwin), 63
‘devils’, 7, 9, 24–6, 29, 31
black, 7, 26, 134
white, 25, 26, 29
see also barbarians
devolution, 68
Dewey, John, 81
Di people, 2, 3, 4
diet, ix, 7, 27, 56, 89, 94, 105
digestive system, ix, 7, 27, 56
disabilities, 103, 107, 108, 119, 121, 132–4
DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid), 130
Dongfang zazhi (*Eastern Miscellany*), 82, 92
Dowager Empress, see Cixi, 39
Drummond, Henri, 64
Du Bois, William, 98
Du You, 6
Duan Chengshi, 11
dualism, 49, 68, 80–1
see also Yin and Yang
Duyvendak, Jan, 11
dwarf slaves (*wonu*), 87, 88–90, 94

Eastern Miscellany, *see Dongfang zazhi*

economic restructuring
in the late Qing, 37–8
during First World War, 79
after Opium War, 22–3
of the treaty ports, 42
education, 34–5, 37, 43, 70, 72, 82–3, 96–7
physical, 115
textbooks, 81, 82, 89, 92, 94, 96–7, 108, 115
elite culture, xv, 2, 7–8, 12–13, 20, 22, 24
Elliott, Mark, 23
Ellis, Havelock, 89, 114
emotions, *see* alienation, anxiety
humiliation, inferiority complex, resentment, superiority complex
encyclopedias, 32, 95
England, *see under* Britain
environmental determinism, xiv, 6, 14–15, 56–7
Ethiopia, 6, 32, 95, 98
ethnic minorities, *see* minority people
ethnocentrism, xiv, 3, 4
eugenics, xiv, 103–22, 123, 130–4
cultural selection, 112–14
laboratories, 109, 120
and Nazism, 91, 103, 117, 119–20
opposition to, 100, 117, 120, 123
and population, 106–7, 110–11, 119
in West, 110–11, 132–3
eurocentrism, 4
Europe, racial theories, viii, ix, x, xiv, 4–6, 19, 24, 28, 44, 93
euthanasia, 103, 107, 131
evidential research, *see kaozhengxue*
evolution, xiv, 41, 55, 62–8, 62–8, 76–7, 88, 89, 92, 108–10
Arab world, 64
differentiation, 77
group selection, 65
holistic approach, 65, 111
individual basis of, 63, 65, 66, 77
natural selection, 55, 62–4, 67, 74, 112–13, 131
unilinear, 76, 89, 110
see also Darwin, degeneration
neo-Lamarckism, recapitulation
Evolution and Ethics, 67
Exclusion Act, 97
Exhibition of the Races of Man, 71
exile, 99, 118–19
eyes, ix, xiv, 5, 10, 11, 15, 26, 27, 29, 33
blue, 26, 27, 29
green, 27
see also semu

fallen people (*duomin*), 50

familism, 113
Fang Xiaoru, 16, 19
Fascism, 77, 89, 101
Fei Xiaotong, 100–1
filial piety, 73, 113
  see also ancestor worship
Fincher, John, 16
Finland, 132
'five quarters', 3–4, 6, 7, 47–8, 95
Foetal Education Institute, 108
food, ix, 7, 56, 89, 94, 105
fossil evidence, 129–30
four quarters (*siyi*), 3–4, 6, 7, 19, 49
Four Treasuries project, 19
Foxe, John, 19
France, 23, 25, 30, 31, 34, 38, 52, 55
  and eugenics, 110–11
  Sino-French War (1884–1885), 37
Franke, Herbert, 14
Fryer, John, 48
Fudan University, 92, 116
Fujian, 29, 41

Galton, Francis, 103–4, 109, 114
Gansu, 75, 124, 133
Garvey, Marcus, 98
genetics, vii, x, xv, 82, 95, 97, 100, 110–15, 118, 120, 123–4, 128, 132
  see also botany, eugenics, heredity
Genghis Khan, 70, 99
genomics, vii
gentry-merchant class, 37–8
  see also social classes
geography, 4, 20, 31–2, 47–9, 95
  see also continents, cosmology, environmental determinism
Germany, 51, 55, 87, 99
and eugenics, 103, 110, 111
Ghana, 126, 134
ghosts (*gui*), 9, 25, 27
  see also 'devils'
Giddings, Franklin, 65
Goddard, Henry, 116
de Goes, Bento, 34
Gong Tingzhang, 87, 89, 93
Gong Zizhen, 106
Gongyang, 2
gorillas, 94
Gould, Stephen, vii
'great community', *see datong*, 2
Greece, 4, 6, 103, 109
Gregor, A. James, 77

group, *see qun*
group selection, 65
Gu Huan, 12–13
Gu Jiegang, 73, 86
Gu Shoubai, 93, 94
Gu Yanwu, 17, 70
guinu (‘devil slaves’), ix, 7, 11
  see also slaves, devils
Guangdong, 41, 86
Guangzhou, 134–5
  see also Canton
Gulja, 125
guo (‘state’, ‘country’), 69
guocui (national essense), 75
Guomindang, 77, 101, 119, 127
  and eugenics, 119

Haeckel, Ernst, 45, 88, 90
Hainan, 7
hair, ix, xiv, 5, 7, 9, 10, 26, 29–30, 31, 88–91
  red, 10, 25, 29, 31
Hakka people, xviii–xix, 24, 43
Haldane, John Burdon Sanderson, 117
Hamites, 45, 51
Han dynasty (206 BC–AD 220), 2, 5–6, 12, 53
Han ‘race’, xiv, xv, 15, 43, 53, 61, 70–8, 127–30
  chauvinism, 124
  extinction of, 45–7, 71, 110, 111, 120
  origins of, 83–6
  purity of, 84–6, 101
  as superior, 89, 91–3, 96, 98–9
Han Yu, 50
Hangzhou, 130
Hankou, 47
Hanlin Academy, 83
Hao Qinming, 120
Hardy, John, 30
harelips, 105, 131
Hart, Robert, 33
Hawaii, 46, 71
He Chengtian, 13
He Qi, 37
He Xiu, 2
Heilongjiang, 53, 86
Henan, 130, 133
heredity, 49–50, 78, 108, 110, 111, 115–16, 118, 120–1, 134
  see also eugenics, genetics, inheritance, recapitulation
Hevi, Emmanuel, 126
Hirayama Shū, 52
Hitler, Adolf, 119

Hogben, Lancelot, 117
Hokkaido, Japan, 88
Holland, *see* Netherlands
Homer, 6
Hong Kong, 22, 54
Hong Liangji, 106
Hu Bingxiong, 45
Hu Buchan, 121
Hu Han, 16
Hu Huanyong, 98
Hu Shi, 81, 83
Huainanzi, 5
Huang Jie, 75
Huangshu (*Yellow Book*), 18
Huang Zhenxia, 99–100
Huang Zunxian, 59, 60, 66
Huard, Pierre, 34
Hubei, 48, 107
Hui people, 127
Human Genome Project, vii
humiliation, 59, 71–2, 125
  see also alienation, anxiety
  inferiority complex, resentment, superiority complex
Hunan, 17, 19, 25, 43, 46, 48, 85, 86
Hundred Days' Reform (1898), 52, 55
Hung, Frederick, 97
Huxley, Julian, 117
Huxley, Thomas Henry, 67–8, 95, 111
hygiene, see racial hygiene, medicine

imperialism, 125–6
India, 4, 8–11, 26, 32, 41, 56, 57, 69, 71
  see also Ceylon
individualism, 77, 80, 112–15, 122
Indonesia, 71, 88
inferiority complex, 97–100
  see also alienation, humiliation
inheritance
  acquired characteristics, 63, 67, 123–4
  behavioural traits, 110
  see also genetics, heredity recapitulation
Institute of Social Science, 98
intellectuals, xiv–xv, 19, 38–9, 42, 48, 53, 57, 61, 64–7, 79–80, 83, 111, 114, 121, 125
  see also social classes
intelligence, 91–3, 110, 116, 117, 118, 121
intermarriage, 14, 33–4, 43, 50, 54–5, 56, 57, 72, 85, 86, 92, 101, 117, 134–5
Internet, x, 135
Imperial Academy, 106
IQ tests, 92–3, 116, 118, 121
  see also brain measurements

Isaacs, Harold, 1
Isidore of Seville, 4
Islam, 43, 64, 81, 124–5, 127
Italy, 77, 98

jade, 8
Japan, 25, 32, 35, 38, 39, 52, 54, 59, 71, 87, 88, 93, 94–5, 96
  Chinese students in, 62, 69, 86, 90
  Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), 98
  Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), 35, 38
  Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), 119, 127
  Shandong concessions, 99
  see also pan-Asianism, *wonu*
Java, 71
Jenner, William John Francis, 129
Jennings, Herbert, 116, 117
Jerusalem, 5
Jesuit missionaries, 21, 34
Jews, 71–2, 100, 103, 120
see also anti-Semitism
Jiang Menglin, 83
Jiang Xiangqing, 92
Jiang Zhiyou, 45, 75
Jiangnan region, 23, 105
  see also Jiangsu, Shanghai, Suzhou, Zhejiang
Jiangsu, 85, 86
Jianzhen, 9
Jin dynasty (1115–1234), 1, 14
Jin He, 26
Jin Zizhi, 115
Jinan National University, 83, 85
jingshi (‘practical statecraft’), 15, 39
  see also Confucianism
Johnson, M. Dujon, 134
journals, 38–9, 62

Kamachi Noriko, 59
Kang Youwei, 22, 40, 42, 55–6, 59, 60, 81, 87, 108
kaozhengxue (evidential research), 21
  see also Confucianism
Kashiwabara Bantarō, 52
Kazakhs, 125
Ke Xiangfeng, 118
Khitans, 14, 15
Khmers, 9
Kirby, William, 120
Kohn, Marek, vii
Kokand, 22
Kongzi gaizhi kao, 81
Korea, 15, 32, 53, 71
Korean War (1950–1953), 125

Koxinga, 70
Kropotkin, Peter, 64
Kudur Nakhunti, 75
Kunlun Mountains, 9, 10, 11, 41
Kunming, 91

Lamarck, Jean Baptiste, 63–4, 67–8, 76, 88, 110–11
Lamley, Harry, 43
Latin 'race', 51–2, 98
Lawrence, William, 93
legalism, 43
lei ('group', 'category', 'type'), 18, 19, 44
Leroi, Armand, viii
Lewontin, Richard, vii
Li Dazhao, 101
Li Gui, 34
Li Ji, 84–5, 127
Li Peng, 131
Li Xuezeng, 95
Li Zubai, 44
Liang Boqiang, 86
Liang Qichao, 39, 40, 41–2, 45–53, 57–8, 75, 101, 108, 117
lianhuan tuhua (picture-story books), 30
Liao dynasty (907–1125), 23
Liaoning, 133
Liji (Book of Rites), 2, 3, 6
  and unchanging nature of people, 3, 7
  and environmental determinism, 6
  see also classics
Lin Yan, 85, 127
Lin Yutang, 86, 89, 90, 93
Lin Zexu, 29, 31
lineage, *see zu*
Liu Huru, 94
Liu Shipei, 73
Liu Xiaobo, 135
Liu Xiong, 111–12
Liu Yazi, 75
Lo, Winston, 15
London, England, 28, 33
London School of Economics, 101
Lou Jing, 135
Louis xiv, king of France, 34
Lü Liuliang, 17
Lu Xinqiu, 97
Lu Xun, 99, 109
Lu Zhengxiang, 57
Lu Zhiwei, 92
Luckmann, Thomas, 24
lynching, 50–1

Lysenko, Trofim, 123–4

Ma Huan, 10
Ma Junwu, 65
Macau, 11, 30
macaques, 10, 50, 77
  see also monkey, orangutans
Macartney mission (1793), 22
Machery, Edouard, viii
Mackenzie, Robert, 58
Madagascar, 9, 11
  see also Africa
Mahler, Jane, 9
Malabar, 9
Malacca, 8, 10, 11, 31
Malaysia, 8, 9, 57, 78, 88, 94
malformations, 121
Malinowski, Bronislaw, 101
Mallon, Ron, viii
Malthus, Thomas, 63, 106, 121
Manchus, 17–20, 23, 24, 53, 61, 68, 70, 73, 74, 78, 79, 84, 96, 127
  see also anti-Manchuism
Mao Zedong, x, 19, 56, 125–7, 135
Martin, William A.P., 59
Maspero, Henri, 8
masturbation, 115
Maternal and Infant Health Law, 133
matrimonial system, 113, 117–18, 121
Mazhar, Ismail, 64
Mecca, Arabia, 10
medicine, 27, 55, 70, 82, 104–5, 110
Mencius, 12, 55
  see also Confucianism
Mendel, Gregor, 110–11, 115, 123
mental illness, 116, 118, 119, 121, 133
Meserve, Ruth, 4
Mexico, 33
Miao people, 53
migration, 55, 56, 117
milk, 11, 34, 105
millenarianism, 24, 68
Ming dynasty (1368–1644), 8, 10, 11, 16, 19, 21, 24, 29, 30, 32
Mingshi (History of the Ming), 27
Ministry of Social Affairs, 119
'minority people', x, xv, 4, 43, 53, 85, 124, 128–9
  autonomy, 124–5
  bestial origins of xv, 3
  and 'Chinese nationality', 128–9
  conflicts, 24, 43
minzu ('nation'), 61, 77, 124

overlap with ‘race’, 69
missing link, 93
Miyasaki Torazō, 52
see also pan-Asianism
Mongolia, Mongols, 15–17, 34, 45, 48, 53, 73, 78, 125, 127, 128, 129
Mongoloid ‘race’, 95–6, 128, 129
monkeys, 10, 45, 50, 77, 89, 106
see also chimpanzees, gorillas, macaques, orangutans
monogenism, 44–5
see also bigenism, origins, polygenism
Mote, Frederick, 16
Mozi, 39
Mu Guangzong, 131
Muslims, 43, 64, 81, 124–5, 127

Naito Konan, 22
Nanjing, 79, 134
Nanjing, treaty of (1842), 22–3
national essence (*guocui*), 75
National People’s Congress, 132, 133
nationalism, 14, 15, 38, 40, 69, 71, 73, 76, 79, 111, 129
blood and soil, 76, 78
and humiliation, 71
racial nationalism, 77–8 terminology, 69
Native Americans, 35, 46, 48, 88
natural selection, 55, 62–4, 67, 74, 112–13, 131
Nazism, 91, 103, 117, 119–20
Neanderthals, 96
Negroid ‘race’, 95–6, 128
neiyi (‘inside barbarians’), xv
Neo-Confucianism, 14, 21
Neo-Lamarckism, 63–4, 67–8, 76, 88, 110–11
Netherlands, 29, 31, 70
New Culture Movement, 21, 78–80, 82, 108
New Guinea, 94
New Life Movement, 119
New Text Confucianism, 21–2, 29, 39, 40, 58
New York University, 116
newspapers, 38–9, 115
Ningbo, 26
Ningxia, 124
Noah, 4, 47
non-canonical philosophies, *see zhuzixue*
Nordic ‘race’, 87, 96
Norway, 132
numerological symbolism, 48
see also cosmology

odour, 30–1, 56
Okamoto Kansuke, 58, 60
Olympic Games, 135

On the Origin of Species, 62–3
one-child policy, 130
'One World', *see datong*
Opium Wars
  First (1839–1842), 21, 22, 27, 29, 30, 33, 35
  Second (1856–1860), 23
orangutans, 50, 94
origins, 44–5
  see also bigenism, monogenism, polygenism
Osaka, Japan, 71
'Out of Africa' thesis, 130
Outer Mongolia, 129

Pan Gongzhan, 119
Pan Guangdan, 83, 100, 112–17, 119, 123, 131
palaeoanthropology, x, 129
Pamir Mountains, 99, 125
pan-Asianism, 52–3
pastoralism, 115
paternalism, 126
Pauling, Linus, 103
peasants, 8–9, 10, 94, 131
Peking Man, *see* Beijing Man
People's University, 131
Philadelphia Exhibition, 34
Philippines, 11, 41, 52
physical education, *see under* education
physiology, 55
  see also anatomy
picture-story books (*lianhuan tuhua*), 30
pigtails, 71
Pliny the Elder, 6
Poland, 130
Polo, Marco, 34
polygamy, 121
polygenism, 44–5, 94, 129
  see also bigenism, monogenism, origins
Polynesia, 88
Popenoe, Paul, 120
popular culture, xv, 24
population, 106–7, 110–11, 119, 130–4
  see also birthrates
Portugal, 10, 11–12, 31
practical statecraft, *see jingshi*
pregnancy, *see* childbirth
Principles of Sociology (Spencer), 65
propithecantropus, 94
Pruner-Bey (Franz Ignaz Pruner), 88
Punti people, 24, 43
qi ('ether', 'fluid', 'energy'), 6, 15, 57

Qi Sihe, 101
Qianhanshu, 10
Qianlong, Qing emperor, 22, 23
Qin dynasty (221–207 BC), 8, 53
Qing dynasty (1644–1911), 1, 12, 17, 21–35, 37–60, 61–77, 79, 107
Qinghai, 124
Qinghua University, 100, 112, 117
qun (‘herd’, ‘group’ or ‘flock’), 19, 66–9

race
  ancestry, 72–4
  assimilation, 46, 54–7, 124–5
  classification of, 47–9, 86–97
  cognitive & evolutionary approach viii
  and culture viii–ix, xiv, 3, 44, 59, 77, 89
  definition of, viii–ix
  discrimination, x, xiii, 3, 16, 26, 49, 50–1, 134–5
  evolution, 62–8
  extinction of, 45–7, 71, 110, 111, 120
  frontiers, 51–3
  genomics, vii
  hierarchy, 49–51, 71
  nationalism, 77–8
  origins, 44–5, 75–7
  preservation of, 69–72
  purity, 84–6, 101
  scientific arguments in favour of, vii, x
  as social construct vii, viii, xiv
  war, 41–4, 97–101, 125
  as Western concept viii, xiii, 1
racial war, 41–4, 97–101
racism, x, xiii, 3, 16, 26, 49, 125, 134–5
Rankin, Mary, 64
raw *v*. cooked food, ix, 7, 56, 89, 94
recapitulation, 88–90
  see also Haeckel; evolution
reformers, xiv, 19, 32, 37–60, 68, 70–1, 95, 107–8
Republican era (1911–1949), xiv, 77–8, 79–101, 103–122, 127
resentment, 97, 99–100 *see also* alienation, anxiety, humiliation
revolutionaries, *see* Xinhai Revolution
Ricci, Matteo, 12, 106
Rice, Condoleezza, x, 135
Richard, Timothy, 58
Risch, Neil, vii
Roma people, 103
Rome, 6, 41, 51, 76, 109, 122
Roosevelt, Theodore, 103
Russia, 32, 55, 69, 98, 110, 125
Rwanda, 126
Ryukyu Islands, 71

Sakai Tadao, 32
Sandwich Islands, 58
Scandinavia, 87, 132
Schall, Adam, 44
schizophrenia, 133
schools, *see under* education
Schram, Stuart, 125
seed, *see zhong*
segregation, xiii, 23, 56, 103, 107, 111, 118, 119, 121
selective breeding, 104
self-study series, *see congshu*
Semites, 45, 51
semu ('Coloured eyes'), 15
serology, x, 128
Seville, Isidore of, 4
sex, sexuality, 28–9, 33, 93, 103, 107, 119, 120
Shang Yang, 42
Shandong, 99
Shanghai, 57, 79, 83, 85, 97, 109, 125, 134
Shanghai Exhibition Centre, 132
Shanhaiguan, 73
Shanhaijing, 5, 9
Shao Lizi, 119
Shaoxing, 50
Shenxi, 117, 119
Shijing (Book of Odes), 2, 8
Shujing (Book of History), 2, 3
Shumayyil, Shibli, 64
sihai (four seas), 4
*siku quanshu (*four treasuries), 19
Sichuan, 84
Singapore, 54, 57
Sino-French War (1884–1885), 37
Sino-Japanese War
  First (1894–1895), 35, 38
  Second (1937–1945), 119, 127
sinocentrism, 31, 60
siyi (four quarters), 4, 19, 49
siyiguan (four barbarians' bureaux), 19
skin colour, ix, xviii–xix, 4, 6, 8, 26–7, 31, 56, 86–8
Siberia, 74, 84
slavery ix, xiii, 7, 9, 11–12, 26, 32, 66
  black slaves, ix, 7, 11, 26, 32, 41 59–60, 72, 87, 94
  in Canton, ix, 7
  devil slaves (*guinu*), ix, 7, 11
  dwarf slaves (*wonu*), 87, 88–90, 94–5
  kunlun slaves, 11, 32
  Song dynasty, 11
  Tang dynasty, 11
  in United States, xiii, 72

Slavonic ‘race’, 51–2, 98
Smith, Samuel, 47
Snowden, Frank, 6
social classes, 8–9, 10, 94, 111–12, 114, 117, 121, 125, 131
  emergence of new, 37–8
  see also bourgeoisie, gentry-merchant class, intellectuals, peasants
‘social Darwinism’, 40, 62
  see also evolution
sociology, vii, 64–6, 100, 116–17, 123, 131
Song dynasty (960–1279), 8, 9, 11, 14–15, 25, 34, 53, 73, 104
Song Lian, 19
Song loyalism, 15–18
South Africa, 126
South America, 32, 94
Soviet Union, 123, 125
Sparta, 108, 121
Spain, 109
Spencer, Herbert, 41, 63–8
  translations of, 65, 66
Spring and Autumn Annals, 2, 76
statistics, 46, 72, 98, 110, 111, 117, 121
stereotypes, 93–5
sterilisation, 55, 103, 108, 110, 117, 119, 121, 132–4
study societies (*xuehui*), 38
statecraft, *see jingshi*
Sullivan, Michael, 126
Sumero-Akkadians, 45
Sun Benwen, 116
Sun Yatsen, 40, 77–8, 127
Sun Yatsen University, 87, 88
superiority complex, 97, 98–9
Suzhou, 16
Sweden, 132
symbolic universe, 24, 26, 40, 48

Taiping War (1850–1864), 23–4, 38, 107
Taiwan, 71, 83, 94
Tajiks, 125
Tan Sitong, 32, 40, 107
Tang Caichang, 47, 48, 49, 50, 54, 58, 59
Tang dynasty (618–907), 6, 9–11, 53, 101
Tang Peng, 106
Tao Jing-shen, 14
Tao Menghe, 98
Taoism, *see* Daoism
Tartars, 74
Terrien de Lacouperie, Albert, 45, 75–6
Teutonic ‘race’, 51–2, 98
textbooks, *see under* education
Thailand, 94

Thomas, Keith, 93
Three Principles of the People, 77
Tiananmen pro-democracy movement, 135
Tianjin, x, 41, 79, 134
tianxia (‘All under heaven’), 2
Tibet, x, 32, 53, 78, 124, 127, 128
Tillman, Hoyt, 14
Timor, 11
Tong Runzhi, 92
Tongji University, 92
Tongmenghui, 77
Traoré, Boubacar, 134
Treaty of Nanjing (1842), 22–3
Treaty of Versailles (1919), 99
treaty ports, 39, 42, 55
Tredgold, Arthur, 116
Tribute of Yu, 3, 48
Tufan people, 53, 74
Tungus people, 53, 74, 84
Turkey, 78, 98, 109

Uighurs, x, 124–5, 128
United States, x, xiii, 33–4, 46, 52, 70, 87, 93, 98–9, 130
  African-Americans, x, 46, 47, 50–1, 98, 135
  anti-Chinese sentiment in, 59, 98–9
  Exclusion Act, 97
  future colony of the yellow race, 51
  lynching, 50–1
  Native Americans, 35, 46, 48, 88
  slavery, xiii, 72
University of Wisconsin, 97
urban culture, 38

vernacular (*baihua*), 62, 80
Versailles, Treaty of, 99
Vietnam, 9, 23, 32, 41, 52, 57, 94, 125
visual perception, 35

Wang Dahai, 31
Wang Fuzhi, 17–19
  concept of *lei*, 18
  concept of *qun*, 66
Wang Guan, 104
Wang Kaiyun, 25
Wang Mang, 16
Wang Qingren, 28
Wang Shiduo, 106–7
Wang Tao, 37
Wang Yan, 8
Wang Yunwu, 82
Wang Zhongyang, 26–7

Ward, Lester, 65
Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, 103
Wei Juxian, 83–4, 119–20
Wei Yuan, 22, 31–2
Wells, Herbert George, 103
Wen Yiduo, 98–9
Western influence, 40, 46–7, 57–60, 80–1, 113–14
Western Jin dynasty (265–316), 8
Wheaton, Henry, 59
white, 8, 10
  symbolises death, 35
  see also colour symbolism, skin colour
white peril, 47, 71
  see also yellow peril
white 'race', 45, 51–2, 54, 70, 72, 74, 80, 83–4, 89, 125, 129
  ability to group, 67
  odour of, 30–1
  hair, 29–30
  and imperialism, 125–6
  regarded as reddish purple, 34
  sex-drive of, 28–9
  turn black, ix, 31, 87
'wild men' (*yeren*), 11
Women's Federation, 132
wonu (dwarf slave), 87, 88–90, 94–5
  see also Japan
Woodworth, Robert, 85
World War I (1914–1918), 79
World War II (1939–1945), 91, 119, 127
Wu Dingliang, 91
Wu Rukang, 129
Wu Tingfang, 54
Wu Zelin, 72, 97–8
Wuhan, 79
Wyatt, Don, 10

Xia dynasty (2205–1600 BC), 2, 43, 83–4
Xia Yuzhong, 109
Xiamen, 31
Xie Qinggao, 31
Xin dynasty (AD 9–23), 16
Xinhai Revolution (1911), 61–2, 68, 77–8, 82, 108, 122
Xinjiang, 22, 53, 124–5
  see also Uighurs
Xiongnu, 53, 74
Xu Guangqi, 106
Xu Jiyu, ix, 29, 31–2, 58
Xu Naiji, 106
Xu Shidong, 26
Xu Shilian, 116

Xu Zi, 106
Xue Fucheng, 34, 56–7
Xunzi, 39, 55, 66

Yamada Ryōsei, 52
Yan Duhe, 115
Yan Fu, 40, 41, 45–6, 47, 50, 58, 64, 66–9, 108
Yan Shigu, 10
Yan Yuan, 106
Yang Guangxian, 44
Yang Lien-sheng, viii, 135
Yangzi River, 13, 14, 17, 85
Ye Dehui, 60
Ye Lin, 16
Ye Shaochun, 98
Ye Shi, 15, 16
Ye Xuesheng, 70
yellow 'race', x, 18, 44–5, 51–3, 60, 80, 89, 128–9
  ability to group, 67
  origin of notion, 34–5
  origins, 75, 83–6
  as superior, 89, 91–3, 96, 98–9
  symbolism of colour, 34, 35
  see also colour, skin colour
Yellow Book (*Huangshu*) 18
Yellow Emperor, 35, 44, 45, 51, 70, 72–4
yellow mud, 34, 44, 60
yellow peril, 51, 59, 71
  see also white peril
Yellow River, 35, 75, 86, 99
yeren ('wild men') 11
Yi Nai, 54
Yi people, 2, 3, 7
Yi Jiayue, 115
Yijing (Book of Changes), 2
Yin and Yang, 6, 49
Yogacara Buddhism, 76
Yongle, Ming emperor, 10
Yongzheng, Qing emperor, 49
You Jiade, 89
Young, Donald, 100
Young Lung-chang, 51
Yu Jingrang, 117
Yu Zhengxie, 28
Yuan dynasty (1260–1368), 1, 15–17, 23
Yue people, 53
Yung Wing, 34
Yuqian, 27
Yunnan, 17

Zaydan, Jurji, 64

Zeng Guangquan, 64
Zeng Guofan, 42, 64
Zhang Binglin, 64, 67, 76, 108
  concept of *qun*, 67
Zhang Deyi, 29–30, 33
Zhang Junjun, 85–6, 91–2, 117–19
Zhang Liyuan, 91
Zhang Xie, 10
Zhang Xinglang, 11
Zhang Xueliang, 119
Zhang Zhenbiao, x, 128
Zhang Zhidong, 48
Zhang Ziping, 90
Zhang Zuoren, 88
Zhao Rugua, 9, 11
Zhao Tongmao, 128
Zhejiang, 17, 69, 85, 86, 130, 133
Zheng Guanying, 37, 42
Zheng He, 10
Zheng Sixiao, 16
Zheng Xuan, 6
Zhigang, 29, 34
zhong (‘seed’, ‘race’), 43–4, 69, 104, 108
Zhou dynasty (1122–255 BC), 9, 42, 53
Zhou Jianren, 109–11, 123
Zhou Qichang, 95, 98
Zhou Qufei, 11
Zhou Xiaozheng, 131
Zhoukoudian, 85
Zhu Weiji, 89
Zhu Xi, 87–8, 95
Zhu Yu, 7, 11
zoology, 54, 55, 81, 88, 94, 100
Zou Rong, 74
zu (‘lineage’, ‘race’), xiv, 16, 19–20, 23, 43, 61
Zuni Indians, 35
Zuozhuan, 3, 19